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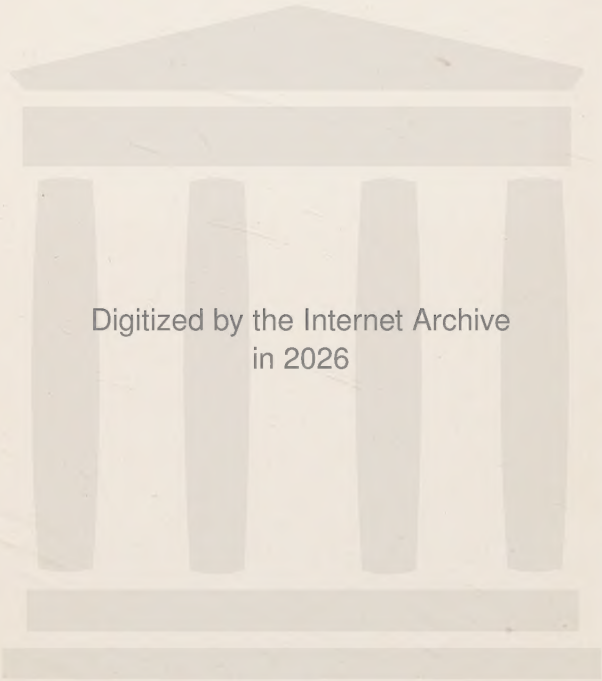
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ECCLESIA DISCENS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE REPROACH OF THE GOSPEL

An Inquiry into the Apparent Failure of Christianity as a General Rule of Life and Conduct, with Special Reference to the Present Time.

Being the Bampton Lectures for the Year 1907.

FIFTH IMPRESSION. 8vo, 5s. 6d. net.

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
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ECCLESIA DISCENS

THE CHURCH'S LESSON FROM THE AGE

BY THE REV.
JAMES H. F. PEILE, M.A
VICAR OF ALL SAINTS, KNIGHTSBRIDGE
AND
CANON OF ST. MICHAEL'S, COVENTRY

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PREFACE

THE Sermons and Essays contained in this volume belong to many times and many places; but they are connected by a common thought which runs through them all, and have been chosen or written as bearing on the question which is implied in the title of the book—*Ecclesia Discens;* the Church which somehow seems to have lost the right and power to teach the world; and now has to learn from it, if nothing else, at least how to become its teacher again. In other words, I have tried to study the relation of Christianity to the intellectual and social revolutions which appear to be moving every day with increasing velocity about us. A time of swift change winnows out roughly the temporal from the eternal; and in such a time it is well for the persons and institutions that can discern for themselves where truth and life lie in adaptation to environment, and where they lie in resistance to environment. The two parts of this book offer what have seemed to me hints and helps to that discrimination in the case of the Church and Christianity. I have not tried this time 'to raise more questions than I can solve'; but I expect that will be the result of my attempts at solution.

In the first part of the book, the first two chapters deal generally with the religious unrest of the day; and the next three more specially with what is called Modernism. The two papers which follow, on the 'Sixth Chapter of St. John,' and the 'Earliest Preaching,' will probably puzzle some readers as to the reason of their inclusion. They are intended, not as serious critical studies, but rather as examples of the kind of interest that a very moderately equipped student can get from a reverent treatment of the Bible 'as any other book.' In the second part, I have to thank Mr. John Murray for his courtesy in allowing me to reprint the first paper called 'Religio Pueri,' which appeared originally in *The Monthly Review*. The titles of the remaining chapters sufficiently indicate their purpose; and a certain light is thrown, by the dates and places given, on the special conditions under which some of them were first delivered, and which have sometimes influenced the form of what is said in them.

While this book was passing through the press my attention was drawn to one with the same title, 'Ecclesia Discens,' by the Rev. A. W. Hutton, published by Mr. Francis Griffiths of Maiden Lane, Strand. Mr. Hutton and Mr. Griffiths have most kindly expressed their willingness to allow me to use this title for my book, and I am greatly indebted to them both for their courtesy.

LONDON, *January* 31, 1909.

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PART I

BELIEF

ECCLESIA DISCENS

EPIPHANY[1]

'To be a Light to lighten the Gentiles.'—LUKE ii. 32.

IN the season which follows upon the Christmas Feast our Church commemorates the Epiphany, the Showing of Christ to the Gentiles, typified by those wise men from the East, who were guided by the star to the manger-bed of Bethlehem.

To us Christians it seems to be most clearly foreshadowed in the Old Testament Scriptures that the promised Messiah of the house and lineage of David was also to be the Saviour of the World. In God's promise to Abraham it was assured that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed, and in the utterances of the Prophets the same thought is often present. Yet to the Jews of that day the idea would have been strange and unwelcome. They looked forward eagerly enough to a time of universal dominion, when all the nations of the earth should bow before the throne of a new and

[1] St. Peter-in-the-East, Oxford, January 10, 1909.

mightier Solomon, and humbly accept the religious and political supremacy of the Chosen People; and in the meanwhile they were ready to receive the proselyte who submitted to give up all in order to identify himself with them; but that the promises and blessings of the covenant should be extended to the Gentiles as Gentiles was to them alike incredible and hateful; how hateful we can judge for ourselves if we follow St. Paul on his missionary journeys in Greece and Asia.

It was this narrow and exclusive spirit which so long secured for the Jews scattered through the world the tolerance and protection of the Roman government, because they did not attack the established order, as Christians did. Yet it was the same spirit, the same adherence to their national idea, which in Palestine drove them to that desperate resistance to the Imperial power, which ended only with the destruction of the Holy City.

But if the Jews were willing to let the nations of the earth perish in their sins without help or warning, such was not the purpose of the Divine Providence. And never surely did the human race stand in more bitter need of a Saviour than when our Lord came. For the old religions, in Europe at least, were dead. The nature-worship of the Greek, the nobler instinct which taught the Roman to find his gods in the em-

bodiment of human virtues, had lost their hold upon the minds of men. The ancient beliefs had become incredible to the educated, and with the vulgar had sunk into debasing superstition, opposed alike to reason and morality. Yet even so God did not leave Himself altogether without witness in the heathen world. Wise and good men, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked, and desiring to save themselves at least from the evil around them, evolved systems of philosophy; rules of life full of beauty and truth, but inoperative for good, because they were selfish. It is not for us lightly to judge these men. All honour to them for their patient study of the human soul and the influences which ennoble or degrade it. The best of them were indeed not far from the kingdom of God. But at the best they spoke only to a chosen few; the great mass of mankind was as much outside the pale to the philosopher as to the rabbi. Salvation was for the wise, the strong, the free; for the weak and ignorant, above all for the sinner, they had no message. Men still felt, as they will always feel, a craving for something higher than material well-being, and sought to satisfy it, perhaps by study and self-discipline, or again by the feverish enthusiasm of some new idolatry; but in vain. It seemed as if nothing was left to guide and nourish the higher part of human nature. Into this world full of doubt and despair Christ

came; and for the first time in history the poor had the Gospel preached unto them. The people that walked in darkness saw a great light. They that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, on them a light shined. A gospel of comfort to the sorrowful, of pardon to the sinner, was a new thing, unheard of till then; and the outcast and oppressed learned with joyful wonder that for them too there was hope, because the Son of God had come down from His place in Heaven to live and die and rise again for them. Naturally it was to the poor and unhappy that the message appealed first and with most force. Heathen writers made merry over the new faith, which found its converts among rude craftsmen and labourers, among slaves and criminals; so blind were they to the true strength of a religion. And soon it appeared that no earthly place or fortune could put man's soul beyond the need of the Gospel. The rich man weary of luxury, the student puzzled and unsatisfied by his books, found in its teaching relief and certainty. We know how in spite of contempt and cruel persecution the tide of Christianity spread ever broader and higher, till at last the Emperor himself received the rite of baptism, and the Church won the doubtful privilege of official recognition and patronage. Whatever may have been her debt to the Empire, it was amply repaid in the dreadful years when the Roman power was falling under

the attacks of the northern barbarians. Those rough conquerors recognised in her Faith something higher and stronger than themselves, and bowed before it. Not once nor twice only, when armed resistance had failed, did the intercession of holy men save cities from ruin and massacre. And the new masters of Europe were not long content to admire only; a religion which inspired its children to face pain and death with calm endurance appealed strongly to their warlike spirit. They were rough and cruel, but their natures, still simple and uncorrupted by luxury or speculation, were well fitted to receive the high and simple teaching of Christianity. The conversion of the northern nations saved mankind incalculable suffering and degradation. The rule of the Christian conquerors of France and Spain may seem to us harsh and barbarous; but it contrasts strangely with the war of extermination which our own heathen ancestors waged against the Christian natives of Britain.

But it is needless to multiply instances. The working of God's Spirit through the Gospel is written clear for all men to read on the page of History. Slowly and silently for the most part, often thwarted by the weakness and sinfulness of men, often disgraced by the folly or self-seeking of its professors, the Christian faith has worked such a change in the common moral standard that, if we could be suddenly transplanted to the

midst of the highest civilisation of Greece or Rome, we should be ready to die with shame and disgust at the sin and cruelty around us. Vices which were a commonplace with them we have learned to regard as monstrous. Virtues which they named only with contempt we hold to be the very foundation of the Christian life. And more than this. The Saviour who bore our griefs and carried our sorrows has taught us to pity the miserable, and to help the sufferer, and to stretch out a hand of sympathy to the sinner because we know that we all need the divine mercy alike.

And this great Reformation is but the outward and visible sign of the work of the Spirit in the hearts of individual men and women. The saints and heroes of our Faith we know, and we must not neglect them as examples; but they are not more precious in the sight of God than the thousands who have left no memorial and yet have done their part, living pure, honest, peaceful lives, and dying in the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection. This is what Christianity has done for the world; it has lifted mankind into a higher plane of existence by giving them new ideals, nobler purposes in life. Essentially one and unchanging from the beginning, the teaching of the Gospel has fitted itself to the special needs of every time and every land. It has inspired the king and the priest no more and no less than the

poor and ignorant peasant. It has sanctified and ennobled alike the commonest and the most glorious activities of our nature. No impartial thinker will question that Christianity has been in the past the mightiest and most beneficent influence in the history of the human race.

But there is a question which touches us more nearly—the most important of all the questions of this sceptical age which doubts and examines all things. We cannot lay it to rest by ignoring it; we cannot silence it by authority; we must find an answer to it, and on that answer depends all our happiness, all our eternal welfare. And the question is this: Does the star of the Epiphany still shine as a light to lighten the Gentiles; does it guide our feet in the way that leads us where we shall find our Saviour, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Son of man? Or has the light grown dim? Can it be that the faith of Christ lies dying to-day as the faith in the old gods died twenty centuries ago? Some people will tell you that it is so—that the Gospel message speaks no longer to men's hearts, no longer influences their lives. But if it is true, if Christianity is ceasing to be a living force, it must be for one of two reasons. The craving of man for the Divine, for something higher and holier than his own nature, which he may reverence and obey, is undying—it is an essential part of his being; that is not what has failed. It must be

then either that Christianity has done its work, that we have learned all its lessons, reached the goal which it set before us, and are ready to pass on to something higher and better; or that we have found out some surer method of attaining its ends, some brighter light to guide our steps, some more constraining motive of right action. Now you see the first of these reasons needs only to be stated to show its falsity. I was speaking just now of the advance which has been made in morality under the Christian dispensation, and it is right for us to recognise it and thank God for it; yet the progress which we have made seems how small compared with the distance which separates us from the pattern of our Lord's life and teaching. Which of us can pretend that our actions conform entirely even to our own indulgent and imperfect standard? Which of us could endure to have every detail of his life laid bare to the most sympathetic or the most lax judge among his fellow-men? We have a long way to travel yet before we reach the morality of the Sermon on the Mount. Our noblest types fall very far short as yet of the perfect man, of the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

We are agreed, then, that the Gospel has yet work to do in the world, that mankind have not passed the Christian ideal like a milestone on the road of progress, but that it still lies far ahead out of our sight. Remains, then, the other question:

Has the mind of man devised a surer method of attaining our end ; has any teacher arisen among us to teach us a more perfect way? Of teachers nowadays there is no lack. We live in an age that questions everything. All established systems, not religions only, are on their trial, and must give an account of the faith that is in them. Now the spirit of inquiry is not an evil thing in itself, if it is honest. 'Prove all things,' said the Apostle, 'hold fast that which is good.' But I think some of us are rather apt to fasten on the obvious defects of anything that is old, and forget its essential virtues, and it behoves us, for our souls' sake, to examine what is new very exactly and carefully before we commit ourselves to it, however attractive it may be on the surface. Of new teachers there is no lack, and their schemes of salvation, like the old philosophies, contain much that is true, much that is beautiful : but as religions for a work-a-day world they all seem to me to have the same flaw ; they have no sanction, can make no convincing claim on the obedience of any one whose desires run counter to their rules. Perfectly abstract and logical, they impose themselves upon the intellect ; but they cannot provide support or restraint in the stress of passionate temptation ; for their appeal is to the head not to the heart.

Of course it is possible to hold the Christian faith in exactly the same manner : indeed, it is

not uncommon. We know that there were Christians of this type when the Epistle of St. James was written; and especially in times of controversy it is a real and serious danger.

There are some people who really seem to think that the New Testament consists entirely of polemical passages from the Epistles, and to forget the Gospels altogether.

When the doctrines of our Faith are made the badges of party warfare, there is great risk that they will cease to be springs of right action. But observe that it does not follow, as people hastily conclude, that it does not matter what a man believes so long as he does right: such a proposition is recognised as absurd anywhere but in religion. In every other sphere of life it is admitted that knowledge—that is, right belief—is the only ground of right action: and this is no less true in spiritual things; for as Christians our whole theory of life, every motive of our actions, all our hopes for eternity, centre in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the task of following Him is impossible without a strong and living belief. 'If Christ be not risen from the dead,' says St. Paul, 'we are of all men most miserable.' If Christ was not very God He was a self-deceiver, or He deceived others. How shall He be our guide? If Christ did not live and die on this earth as very man, where shall we find the comfort and strength which spring from the belief

that He feels for our sorrow and pain and weakness? If we are to be like Him we must see Him as He is. But this kind of right belief comes easily and lightly to none. It is not the child of intellectual effort only. Which of us reads the Gospels as much and as carefully as we read the books of our favourite authors? And yet a man might spend his life in studying the sacred text, and, if his heart was cold, he would never learn to know Christ. It is not enough to know facts about Him; we must let His life influence our lives till every thought and action is guided by what He would have done, what He would wish us to do. And the first lesson He teaches us is one very necessary in these days —the lesson of humility. 'Come unto Me,' He says, 'all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and 'I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, 'and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of 'heart'; and that must we be if we are His disciples. There must be no self-seeking, no pride. But it is often the hardest lesson of all to learn that we must serve God in His way not in our way. 'My father,' said the wise and faithful servant to the Syrian captain, 'if the prophet had 'bidden thee do some great thing, wouldest thou 'not have done it?' and that, I think, is what we all need to feel sometimes, especially when we are young. We want to do some great thing for God, to find a royal road leading straight to

virtue and wisdom and strength. It is so hard to go on giving our powers to the petty details of life, to spend our time in making those about us just a little happier, to reverence little duties, to avoid little sins. Yet in the dullest and most commonplace surroundings there is opportunity enough, if we will but use it, of serving God and our fellow-men; the simplest actions have dignity and value if we are trying to form ourselves after the pattern of Him Who was perfect in the least as in the greatest circumstances of human life. Assuredly it is not by despising and neglecting the duties which lie next our hand that we shall attain rest and certainty in spiritual things. Rather let it be our purpose to purge our souls of pride and ill-temper, of impurity, of envy and slothfulness, that so, it may be, we may attain, by God's grace, to that purity of heart whose possessors are blessed indeed, for it is written, They shall see God.

BONDAGE OR LIBERTY[1]

'When thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.'—JOHN xxi. 18.

THE words, as the reader will remember, were spoken by our Lord after His resurrection to St. Peter. Now if we consider what the name of St. Peter stood for to all Christendom through the ages up to the sixteenth century; what it still stands for to millions; it is hardly extravagant to apply them, at least in a figurative sense, to the Church; and if it be lawful to apply them at all, they are surely finding their fulfilment in a very striking and alarming manner at the present day; and that not merely with regard to the authoritative organisations which we call the Churches, and their official rulers, but to the Church in that wider meaning which is given by the Bidding Prayer, 'the whole congregation of Christian men 'dispersed throughout the whole world.' All sincere and intelligent Christians must feel the presence of a new power in the spiritual and religious life of the world, a power which lays silent, inexorable hands upon all that we have held most

[1] Westminster Abbey, October 18, 1908.

sacred, most inviolable, in the external symbols of our religion, and pierces even into the secret recesses of men's souls, bidding them give an account of the faith which is in them. And many of us are troubled and uneasy; we feel that we are being carried whither we would not; and we are right to be uneasy, since we feel that we are being carried whether we will or no. For the Power which has us in its grasp is the Spirit of Science, science in its widest sense, including on the one hand the natural sciences, geology, chemistry, biology, and the like; and on the other hand history, and textual and literary criticism. Science, once the nursling of the Church, is now grown to be what? Friend or enemy? Saviour or destroyer? We cannot tell. But this we do feel, that the enemy, if it be an enemy, has its allies within the citadel of our being; that it is not by external coercion that it constrains us, but by its hold on some of what is best in our nature, by an appeal to our understanding, our intellectual sincerity, our value for truth. And so we are troubled and uneasy: we ask ourselves, now, Must I, can I give up this, and this? Now, Can it be that the God of Truth has given me my sense of truth to lead me away from Him?

The trouble is not a new one, though it is only lately that it has become acute for the mass of Christians. Nearly fifty years ago James Anthony Froude wrote in a passage which is a striking

expression of the uneasiness I have been describing: 'The inspiration of the Bible is the foundation of our whole belief: and it is a grave matter 'if we are uncertain to what extent it reaches, or 'how much, and what it guarantees to us as true. 'We cannot live on probabilities. The faith in 'which we can live bravely, and die in peace, must 'be a certainty, so far as it professes to be a faith 'at all, or it is nothing. It may be that all intellectual efforts to arrive at it are in vain: that it 'is given to those to whom it is given, and withheld from those from whom it is withheld. It may 'be that the existing belief is undergoing a silent 'modification, like those to which the dispensations 'of religion have been successively subjected; or 'again it may be that in the Creed as it is already 'established, there is nothing to be added, and 'nothing any more to be taken from it. At this 'moment, however, the most vigorous minds 'appear least to see their way to a conclusion; and 'notwithstanding all the school and church building, the extended episcopate, and the religious 'newspapers, a general doubt is coming up like a 'thunderstorm against the wind, and blackening 'the sky. Those who cling most tenaciously to 'the faith in which they were educated, yet confess 'themselves perplexed. They know what they 'believe, but why they believe it, or why they 'should require others to believe, they cannot tell 'or cannot argue. Between the authority of the

'Church and the authority of the Bible, the testi-
'mony of history and the testimony of the Spirit,
'the ascertained facts of science and the con-
'trary facts which seem to be revealed, the minds
'of men are tossed to and fro, harassed by the
'changed attitude in which scientific investiga-
'tion has placed us all towards accounts of super-
'natural occurrences. We thrust the subject aside;
'we take refuge in practical work; we believe
'perhaps that the situation is desperate, and hope-
'less of improvement; we refuse to let the question
'be disturbed. But we cannot escape from our
'shadow, and the spirit of uncertainty will haunt
'the world like an uneasy ghost, till we take it by
'the throat like men.'[1]

In the forty-five years which have passed since these words were written the issue which Mr. Froude presents so unflinchingly has in one sense decided itself; though not along the lines which he seems to anticipate. He suggests not obscurely that the only alternative possible to the verbal inspiration and equal value of every part of the Bible is its entire worthlessness as a basis of faith, and a rule of life. Now it is not too much to say that to-day all parties in the controversy have moved quite away from that position. No doubt that is still the form in which the question presents itself to uninstructed

[1] 'A Plea for the Free Discussion of Theological Difficulties.' *Fraser's Magazine*, 1863.

minds; but with the spread of authentic information, the conviction is gaining ground that the unquestioned facts of history and psychology maintain the Bible, and the history of the Church in an unique though not an isolated position. The extreme negative attitude which is taken up by any responsible scholar still admits that there is something there which has to be explained, and cannot be explained away.

On the other hand the battle of critical and historical methods has been won—or lost—apparently for ever. There can be no return now to the old *á priori* apologetic based upon the theory of verbal inspiration. That is to say, it will never be accepted again by the mass of educated and intelligent people as having authority upon their intellectual conclusions. The question has been decided, not by the Church, but for the Church, by the common sense of mankind. *Securus judicat orbis terrarum.* It is no longer an open question whether Sacred History and Sacred Texts are to be subjected to the same searching examination, the same impartial tests of accuracy and authenticity which are applied to other history and other documents. We may cling to the belief that they ought not to be so subjected; but we must face the fact that they are so subjected, and that the results which are arrived at by those methods will be judged by their conformity to objective truth, and not to

any preconception whatsoever. We are forced to recognise that the mediæval conception of the relation of the sciences to Theology has passed away for ever. 'The Church'—whatever meaning that word has for each one of us—'is no longer the power it once was, and will never 'be again. Other powers have grown up, and 'have had to be reckoned with. Outside the 'teaching and practice' of official Christianity 'a 'new conception of Science has developed and 'possessed the human mind—the conception of a '*free* science, entirely, absolutely, jealously free; 'mistress of its means and of its ends; recognising 'only the claims of intellect; endued with full 'powers to carry its researches where it thinks 'good, uninterested in everything that is not 'itself, with a curiosity which no discovery can 'exhaust, no resistance can repel, simply seeking 'the Truth, whatsoever it may be, whencesoever it 'may come, whithersoever it may lead. Descartes 'laid down its guiding principle when he claimed 'for the intellect the right, or rather the duty, 'never to accept as true anything which it does 'not clearly know to be true.'[1]

The words are not mine; but I accept them as representing the fact, a fact unwelcome and alarming to instinct and sentiment; irresistible to reason and honesty. I venture to speak of myself and my own feelings in this connection,

[1] *Lendemains d'Encyclique*, p. 21.

not because they are of any special importance, but because I believe they are the feelings of a very great number of men and women, average educated Christians, who make no claim to be scholars or critics themselves, but have a general conviction that the methods of historical criticism are sound and honest, and tend to discover truth: convinced also that Science has at least one lesson to teach Theology; namely, that the guardians of Truth must value and practise before all things the virtue of truthfulness. On the other hand they know that the whole fabric of their moral and religious life is based upon Faith in Jesus Christ directly apprehended in spiritual experience, but also externally manifested in the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament. They are therefore not unreasonably disquieted and unhappy when they are told, as a critic has lately told us, that even in the Synoptic Gospels 'actions and words have 'everywhere been magnified, idealised, retouched 'by the collective consciousness of the first genera-'tions of believers: interpreted in the perspective 'of the Messianic glory. They do not repro-'duce the real Life of Jesus, which is unknown 'to us.'[1]

Now a sentence like that, with its quiet literary form, and its profound and far-reaching significance, is to Christians, and ought to be, a shocking

[1] *Lendemains d'Encyclique*, p. 91.

thing. If it is true, it is terrible, a terrible loss, a terrible perplexity. But here let me speak a word of comfort and warning to myself and to those who think with me. The battle of methods, as I have said, is already lost and won, and some of the results attained by the method we are constrained by intellectual honesty to accept disquiet us. They would have appalled our fathers. But let us still carefully draw the distinction between disquietude, which is right, and panic. Let us not take it for granted that what seems to us the worst *must* be true ; and that all we hold most precious must go down if it is impartially dealt with : so falling again into the singular blunder which the Church of England committed over the Education question : the blunder of taking it for granted that the good cause could not stand without protection, and that a freely elected authority must necessarily be hostile. Above all, let us claim for ourselves the intellectual freedom which we grant to others ; refuse to accept for true anything which is not proved, and inexorably impose upon the critics a strict loyalty to the principles of criticism which they profess.

It is Faith in God which alone at this crisis in the history of Christianity can bring us through safe. Faith can effectually draw the distinction of which I have spoken, between disquietude and cowardice : it can give us calmness and insight

to try the spirits whether they be of God, and courage if need be to face the worst, the loss of aids which have seemed essential to our religion; it can give us the assurance that they were not essential, because they have been taken away.

But what, then, we may reasonably ask, is that worst which we may have to face? I will ask you to listen to two extracts from a French writer whom I have already quoted—one of the latest writers on Modernism, the aspect which this intellectual and religious revolution is taking for the moment in France and Italy. In the first passage he begins by recalling that strange legend of the Roman Empire, which tells how mariners on the Ægean at dawn heard a voice sighing from headland to headland, proclaiming the death of the old gods, and then he continues: 'Alas, 'it seems that at this moment, too, thousands of 'voices rise from all human horizons, many light 'and mocking, many grave and sorrowful, sobbing 'like the sighs of the fatherless, calling to their 'brothers in the cold dim night, to watch the pass-'ing of the obsequies of Christianity.' They cry to each other that 'the ineffable Christian hope 'has departed, the most comforting, the most 'wonderful of religions lies dying there before our 'eyes, dying in its turn as other religions have 'died; that its God, the noblest, the best beloved, 'the purest of all the gods, is passing, slowly but 'surely, to take His place in the dust of ages,

'among the other divinities of Egypt, of Greece, 'of Rome—that Jesus will remain for humanity 'Son of God, *The* Son of God if you will, but 'He will be no more God the Son. And the 'most mystic, the most stalwart of believers 'cannot help hearing the voices, and they are 'troubled. Their lips murmur low the prayer of 'the disciples at Emmaus on a night of fear, '"Master, it is dark; oh leave us not. Abide with us."'[1]

It is a beautiful and haunting passage in the author's French, instinct with the tragic qualities of pity and terror; and if it were true of the present, or of any future which we can contemplate, it would be the worst indeed. But if we call the Spirit of History to our aid, and put dry logic for emotion, the analogy, on which its melancholy conclusion is based, does not hold true. Christianity, whatever it may be, is not a spent force. Surely the signs of the times indicate clearly not that it has done its work for mankind, but in many ways is but now beginning it—that the Spirit of Christ is living and at work among us, in places, it may be, where we should least expect it, in ways, it may be, which perplex and startle us; but so plainly and so beneficently that we are compelled, even against our will, to acknowledge it; and with joy and shame to remember His words, 'Forbid him not, for he that

[1] *Lendemains d Encyclique,* pp. 115, 116.

'is not against us is for us.' But I need not occupy your time in arguing the point, for the same writer gives us the answer to the question in another and a truer picture of the ultimate results of New Testament criticism. 'Suppose,' he says, 'that criticism reduces the personal gospel 'of Jesus to these few simple ideas, the only ones 'moreover which continue to influence the souls 'of men: Trust in God the Father which is in 'Heaven, the brotherhood of the human family, 'belief in the coming of the Kingdom of God, the 'kingdom of Justice and Love, Purity of heart as 'the one condition of Salvation, loyalty to Jesus 'Messiah and Saviour, by whom the good news 'was revealed to men.'[1]

Well, suppose it proved so: and so indeed it seems to men, great scholars and great Christians, the men best fitted by learning and sincerity to guide and instruct us in this hour of perplexity. Should we call that the worst, or the best that could befall us? If the criticism, which we have dreaded as an enemy, should carry us back, even while in our blindness we would not, back past feudalisms and scholasticisms, past Councils and Fathers, even past St. Paul himself, back to the feet of Him who spake as never man spake, who lived as man, yet as no other man ever lived, tempted in all things like as we are yet without sin? For it is there, and not otherwhere, that intellectual

[1] *Lendemains d'Encyclique*, p. 113.

and practical questions meet, and are answered. What, except those few simple ideas, the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of men, the hope of the kingdom, purity of heart, loyalty to the Person of Christ, can help us to solve the riddles of that other revolution which we feel going on about us, which also threatens to carry us whither we would not, the social and moral revolution?

The end is not yet: certainly we of this generation will not fully know what the end is going to be; yet we believe that it will be good, because it will be of God. Meanwhile the trial of faith is sharp. We stand trembling in the darkness, and see our religion wrestling with a mysterious inexorable figure as Jacob wrestled of old. Then let us take Jacob's wrestling for a parable. It may be that the veiled power which holds us unwilling in its grasp is the Angel of the Lord—that we too, if we have courage and sincerity, shall in this chill grey hour before the dawn, see God face to face, and live; that with the sunrise after the long night our Church shall come forth from the divine conflict, halting, indeed, with loss of earthly power which it has prized perhaps too highly, but blessed and purified; no longer Jacob the supplanter, tainted with the memory of old wrongs, ambition, cruelty, evasion, cowardice; but Israel, the Prince of God, having power with God and men, and prevailing.

MODERNISM[1]

WHAT is Modernism? In its narrower sense it is the name given to an intellectual movement among the clergy and religious-minded laity of the Church of Rome, who claim the right to free study of sacred documents and sacred history by modern methods, and also the right to remain in the Communion and in the Orders of that Church. 'The basis of Modernism,' says one of its apologists, 'is the literary criticism of the Old 'Testament, the literary criticism of the New 'Testament, and the historical criticism of the 'origins of Christianity; the whole of that, and 'nothing but that.'[2]

This movement has been definitely condemned, the claim uncompromisingly rejected by the Pope, or perhaps it would be truer to say by the authorities who rule at the Vatican, in the Encyclical 'Pascendi Gregis.' This official utterance of the Church of Rome denounces the Modernist, in succession as philosopher, historian, believer, theologian, and apologist, and finally summarises its judgment in the phrase, 'Modern-

[1] Advent 1908.

[2] *Lendemains d'Encyclique*, p. 9.

'ism is the synthesis of all Heresies. Un-
'doubtedly,' it declares, 'were any one to attempt
'the task of collecting together all the errors that
'have been broached against the Faith, and to
'concentrate into one the sap and substance of
'them all, he could not succeed in doing so better
'than the Modernists have done. Nay, they have
'gone farther than this, for, as we have already
'intimated, their system means the destruction,
'not of the Catholic religion alone, but of all
'religion.' [1]

Briefly put, the Vatican's opinion of Modernism is that it is an atheistical system of history founded on an agnostic philosophy, whose exponents insolently propose to reform the Church from within.

The teaching of the Encyclical has been accepted, and expanded, and enforced by the Roman Catholic Hierarchy, notably by Cardinal Mercier the Primate of Belgium in his Lenten Pastoral, 1908, in which he singles out for reprobation 'The most penetrating observer of
'the present modernist movement—the one most
'alive to its tendencies, who has best divined its
'spirit, and is perhaps more deeply imbued with
'it than any other, the English priest Tyrrell.' [2]

The Modernists and their friends, however, are naturally not disposed to accept this condemna-

[1] 'The Programme of Modernism,' p. 253.
[2] Quoted in Tyrrell's 'Mediævalism,' p. 9.

tion without a protest, or to sit down quietly under the repressive discipline which the last section of the Encyclical recommends: they refuse to submit to the alternative which is tendered to them of renunciation of free inquiry or withdrawal from the Church; and offer to the world a very different account of the aims and methods of Modernism from that which the Vatican pronouncement sets forth. Father Tyrrell's latest book 'Mediævalism,' which is an answer to Cardinal Mercier's Pastoral, and through it to the Encyclical on which it is based, should be read as a whole by every one who is interested in religious progress, both for the light which it casts upon this question, and for the picture it gives of the soul's tragedy of a man who is probably the greatest religious genius of the day.

But I should like to quote one or two passages from other writers, briefly illustrating the line of defence which is taken up against the attacks of Pius X. and his advisers. They stand uncompromisingly for the right and the obligation to seek Truth in religious history by the same rational and scientific methods which are used and approved in secular inquiries. But they repudiate the charge of disloyalty, and rightly point out that the accusations of agnosticism and atheism levelled against their teaching are not only untrue, but mutually contradictory. Further,

they deny warmly that they are trying to set up a system of Anti-dogma against the dogmatic system of the Church : the scientific spirit is the negation of such an attempt. 'It claims no 'kind of infallibility ; its laws, its hypothesis, its 'certainties, always remain to some extent pro- 'visional and relative, liable to be modified by 'the discovery of new facts.' 'Modernism so far 'has been much less a system than a method the 'mere establishing of facts to which this method 'leads : the Modernists have not the least in the 'world been inspired by philosophical preconcep- 'tions: they speak solely in the name of historical 'and linguistic facts : these facts are what they 'are, and no Encyclical can prevent us from seeing 'them and declaring them as they are.' [1]

The purpose of Modernism, again, is not the malign one ascribed to it by the Encyclical : its declared purpose is to 'remedy a state of things 'admittedly painful, and rapidly becoming tragic : 'not to disturb the faith of the ignorant ; but to 'reassure the faith of intelligent and instructed 'believers : to provide men's souls with the bread 'of truth and life which they anxiously ask from 'their Church, and are always disappointed.' [2]

Thus the Modernists return to the Papacy the answer of Elijah to Ahab : 'I have not troubled 'Israel, but thou and thy father's house in that

[1] *Lendemains d'Encyclique*, p. 22.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 24.

'ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord.'[1]

And while they speak resolutely in their own justification they speak also in confident hope that events will justify them. 'In every crisis,' say the Italian modernists, 'which Christianity 'has passed through in the course of its develop-'ment, and whenever the opposition between past 'and unyielding forms of religious expression, and 'a new culture to which they are unsuited has 'become acute, there has arisen in the Church a 'handful of men animated with the design of 'reconciling the old piety, unchangeable in its 'simplicity as a spiritual fact, with the new modes 'of thought. And at the same time the voice of 'the timorous and faithless has ever been raised '. . . to denounce their courageous enterprise 'as heralding disruption and calamity. The 'effects of the conflict have always been advan-'tageous in the same way. The timorous have 'exerted a providential restraint on the hardihood 'of the courageous, apt to run to excess in one 'direction or another. But after the period of 'wavering and hesitation, and as soon as the 'advantages of the new method over the old 'become evident, the bulk of the faithful have 'sided gladly and fearlessly with those who had 'been denounced as revolutionaries.'[2]

And in a passage from Father Tyrrell's answer

[1] 1 Kings xviii. 18. [2] 'Programme,' p. 163.

to Cardinal Mercier, which I quote also because it casts light upon the true and wider meaning of the Modernist movement, he says: 'If the young 'are with us, we have only to wait. A genera- 'tion more and the whole world will be with us. 'The young are with us because they belong to 'the dawning, and not to the declining age. The 'two deepest characteristics of the new order are 'the scientific spirit and the democratic movement, 'a new conception of Truth, and a new concep- 'tion of Authority and Government.'[1]

With this significant sentence I will close a brief, but, I trust, not wholly inadequate exposition of the nature and position of Modernism, and pass to some of the problems which it presents to educated Church people in England, inquiring whether they are merely external to us and such as we can study at our ease if they happen to interest us, or have a practical bearing on our religious life. First, it needs no very deep knowledge of the history of religious thought to perceive at once that the essential principle of Modernism, the application of critical method to Christian documents and Christian History is not in itself a new thing. In Germany, in England, and in America the work of studying the Bible 'as any other book' or books of ancient literature are studied, has been carried on for a great many years. Opinion has differed and still differs

[1] 'Mediævalism,' p. 120.

widely as to the soundness and value of conclusions put forward by various scholars: but the method has come to be practically accepted by men of all degrees of orthodoxy in the countries named: and the Church of England now counts among her most honoured sons men of unquestioned piety and religious influence, who are not followers only but acknowledged leaders in the path of Biblical research and the criticism of the early history of Christian Institutions.

But in the ranks of the Roman Catholic Priesthood, this claim to intellectual freedom in the study of questions hitherto decided by Authority, or at any rate the emergence of the claim into self-consciousness and publicity, appears to be a new thing. It appears so to the lay world who hear of it for the first time: and, if we may judge by their writings, it appears so in some measure to themselves.

And it is noticeable that in France the movement has something of the violence of novelty, the outburst of pent-up forces after long repression. It is, I think, important to recognise this fact, and to take it into account in our judgment of the Modernists. To take a single instance, the extreme negative position held by the Abbé Loisy on the historical value of the Synoptic Gospels stands in marked contrast to the careful and on the whole conservative conclusions of the most trustworthy scholars in Germany and the

English-speaking countries of recent years. It is not for me to criticise a scholar of the character and learning of the Abbé Loisy; but it is not unreasonable to trace in his treatment of his documents the inevitable result of a cruel struggle for liberty of thought. Equally inevitable, perhaps, is a certain petulance of tone, sometimes querulous, sometimes almost menacing towards the Vatican, which we cannot help detecting, and regretting, in the writings of some of the defenders of Modernism. But it is not for us to judge these men. We cannot know what they have suffered, what they are suffering for the cause of Truth. 'Oppression,' the proverb says, 'makes a wise man mad': and in the system of discipline prescribed in the last paragraph of the Encyclical 'Pascendi' we get a glimpse of a condition of things inconceivable to Englishmen, lay or clerical—a condition on which a terrible light is thrown by Tyrrell's book 'Mediævalism.'

I should not have thought it necessary to mention so small a matter as possible faults of taste and temper, but that it brings us directly to what is one of the great puzzles for the external observer of this movement — namely, the desire, and, more than that, the determination of these men to remain within the bosom of a Church which is determined to suppress or eject them: their sturdy and unwavering plea that they are her loyal sons. They see the temptation to with-

draw and be at peace. 'It is hard,' says Tyrrell, 'suddenly to resist the verdict of the little *orbis* '*terrarum* to which he has deferred from child-'hood . . . and then there is that other *orbis* '*terrarum*, formerly hostile, now ready to welcome 'him as a convert and recruit.'[1] They feel the temptation to accept, even to anticipate, the sentence of exclusion; but they refuse to yield to the temptation. The motive, to a course of action which entails great self-sacrifice, is not sordid or sentimental: it springs from a conception of Catholicism as distinct from Vaticanism, which is one of the essential principles of their religion. This is a really important point, and I shall have to return to it in a later chapter.

For the present I will pass on to the last of the obvious questions suggested by the events we are considering, the question whether the Modernists will triumph, or whether the Church of Rome will emerge from this conflict also without making any outward submission to the spirit of the time. The Church of Rome, as even its bitterest enemies must admit, is an institution of astonishing vitality. It survived, apparently unshaken, the Albigensian revolt, and the Hussite rising in Bohemia; it came forth, with loss indeed, but strengthened and purified from the trial of the sixteenth century: it rose once more into power after the catastrophe of the French Revolution; it stands

[1] Tyrrell, 'A Much Abused Letter,' p. 46.

unyielding in its claims in face of the establishment of an united Italian Kingdom. Will it now be able to crush or to assimilate principles which appear to be fatal alike to its intellectual and its political dominion over mankind? He who lives will see. But history and experience alike warn us to think twice and thrice before we say in our haste that Rome is at the end of its resources.

I have left this question to the last because it is one which we must, to a great extent, contemplate from outside; and thus it encourages a general attitude of mind to the whole Modernist movement, which I consider a dangerous one; the position, namely, that this is a purely internal and domestic question belonging to another Church which may interest us enormously as spectators, but does not concern us in the first degree at all. It is true that the question has been present with us longer than with them, and we have recognised it as a question more frankly and courageously than Roman Catholic officialism has been able to recognise it hitherto; but that does not mean that we have solved it. The stir in the Roman Church which is labelled Modernism is in no sense an isolated phenomenon; it is part of a general revolution which is working all over the world. If the new ideas have penetrated into the guarded stronghold of the Roman Priesthood, it is because they have already prevailed everywhere else. The land-locked harbour at

last feels the swell which has moved the depths of the wide ocean. The 'New Conception of 'Truth and the New Conception of Authority 'and Government' are testing and straining the old conceptions of the theory and practice of Christianity in every country and in every sect. If it be granted that the scientific spirit is destructive of the religious spirit at all, then the Encyclical is perfectly right when it says that the Modernist system means the destruction not of the Catholic Religion only but of all religion. And it will destroy the Catholic Religion—in the narrow sense of the religion of Rome—last. The Romanist does not depend in the last resort on the authenticity of any document. He depends upon the Church: he pleads the continuous inheritance of tradition, and the unbroken succession of his hierarchy from the Apostles. One party in the Anglican Church makes similar claims upon a more questionable foundation. But it cannot be too clearly understood that the more directly any Protestant body of Christians bases its religious faith upon the text of the Old and New Testaments, the more directly interested it is in the results of this conflict—that is, in the results of methods whose propriety is no longer controverted by the mass of intelligent and impartial persons. For the Bible Christian, using that word in its widest possible sense, literally *all* is at stake. I do not for a

moment suggest that all is lost, or that anything essential is lost; for I most unfeignedly believe that the effect of unsparing criticism has hitherto been and will increasingly be, in the intellectual and moral aspects of Religion, to enlighten and to constrain: to bring men back to the truth as it is in Christ, and to enforce upon their consciences His practical teaching in all its terrible simplicity. But these are considerations which belong to a later period of our inquiry. It is enough for the moment if we can realise that the movement which seems to have broken out suddenly on the Continent and in the Roman Church, is only part of a wider movement in which we must all be actors—or sufferers. It is indeed a perilous time, big with promise. And if we are to win through the danger, and inherit the promise, we must call up all our wisdom and courage, in order that we may neither be driven by cowardice to blind ourselves to the issue, nor by the temerity which is only an expression of cowardice to hurry the issue, and commit ourselves hastily to the new because it is new; but keeping in mind the words of the Apostle may prove all things—hold fast that which is good.

PERIL OF CHANGE[1]

It will be clear to any one who has followed the partial survey of the nature and history of Modernism given in the last chapter, that a movement so radical in its character, and affecting questions of the most vital importance, must involve risks at least proportionate to the benefits which it hopes to confer upon mankind. And in fact the rapid advance of Modernist ideas into notoriety and influence has excited a very widespread feeling of alarm not only among conservative and elderly-minded persons, but in the hearts of religious thinkers who cannot be accused of timidity or want of enterprise. That alarm is not ill founded : and it is recognised as inevitable and reasonable by the most able and sincere Modernists, who warn their readers against the fatal results of misunderstanding and haste in problems so delicate, of which the ultimate solution is still far in the future ; and frankly regret the loss of safeguards and defences useful in their day but now untenable.

For convenience' sake, I have divided the special dangers of which I propose to speak in

[1] Advent 1908.

detail, under four heads ; but all alike appear to me to spring from a single source which is an inevitable result, and perhaps the most characteristic feature, of the conditions in which the present religious crisis has matured :—namely, the sudden presentation of a new and highly refined and dematerialised conception of Religion to minds which have not learned to distinguish between the externals and the essentials of their faith—that is, to the minds of a very large majority of professing Christians, including many of those who are naturally inclined to adopt extreme progressive views, as well as those of a more reactionary temperament. From this source spring various dangers which may be broadly classed for discussion under four heads, which I will label respectively, Anarchy, Intellectualism, Individualism, and Mysticism; endeavouring now to explain what I mean by those terms in this connexion.

First then for what is meant by the danger of Anarchy. It is sufficiently clear that if Modernism teaches 'a new conception of truth and a 'new conception of authority and government,' its working must be in the first place destructive before it is constructive. We have a terrible object lesson in the stages of such a process in the condition of India at the present time. The type of education which we have thought fit to give to the more intellectual of our subject races in that country has largely undermined their old

religious beliefs, and shown them the insufficiency of their inherited ideas both of science and of politics : but the building up has not gone on side by side with the pulling down : and for the moment many thousands of clever and ambitious men are left without any working conception of truth or of authority and government, with what results we read almost daily in the newspapers. So when the average man or woman, partly educated but without much notion of general principles, is told that the Bible is a rather haphazard collection of human documents, perhaps containing the expression of the Divine will in an imperfect and perishable setting, but certainly *not* what they have taken it vaguely to be, directly inspired and in all respects infallible, the effect of the shock to their preconceptions is often more than intellectual. When they hear for the first time that the Pentateuch was not all written by the pen of Moses, they begin to question the authority of the Ten Commandments upon their lives and actions. And similarly when they come to believe that the Church, to which they have hitherto gone unquestioning if not always obedient for the Rule of Faith and Morals, has grown up as other human institutions grow, and has sometimes displayed rather a large measure of the faults common to human institutions, they are tempted to ask whether anything the Church enjoins is binding on their consciences. In a word,

the discovery that the historical and doctrinal beliefs, which they suppose to have guided their lives hitherto, are open to criticism weakens instinctively the moral sanctions which they consider to be inseparably bound up with those beliefs. Now this danger is not an imaginary one; it is most serious, and it is real and pressing. It is serious because the code of morals which has its root in Christianity is by far the most valuable ethical asset of the human race. Setting aside for the moment its Divine origin and sanction, it is at least the steadily growing and improving heritage passed down the ages to us by the best minds and characters of every age. Doubtless it is not perfect; but the way to perfect it is not by a violent break with the past, which would cut down the healthy and fruitful tree in order to be rid of a cankered branch: but to cherish carefully what is good, and continue the gradual expansion and development on the lines of normal growth. All the analogies of natural science warn us against the futility of catastrophic reform: but the danger of such attempts on a large or small scale is real and pressing. The Christian Ethic of to-day is not perfect: it is in some places apparently arbitrary and materialistic: and is thus open to criticism, and just criticism, in detail. It is, however, the shallowest criticism which will most easily find flaws in an essentially sound fabric. And we must remember

that the ethical criticism of a vast percentage of the human race is essentially shallow, and that in this case it has original sin to spur it to activity. In proportion as the old religious sanctions of Authority and Holy Writ relax their hold, moral sanctions also will loosen for most men and women, unless a new religious sanction can be applied to tighten them again. The thing is already manifest in the dangerous and truly anti-social laxity with regard to marriage which has grown up almost within living memory.

These considerations suggest certain practical counsels and obligations to those who are in any sense teachers and leaders of religious thought; first, perhaps, the Clergy, but by no means exclusively the Clergy, for in those days new ideas are spread more rapidly and effectively by books and newspapers, and even in conversation, than from the pulpit. This responsibility lies equally on all who are capable of receiving and transmitting ideas, in proportion to their power and opportunity. The first duty is certainly intellectual sincerity, loyalty to Truth. We must not do evil that good may come of it, nor say what we know or believe to be untrue for the purpose of edification. But there is also another duty, which is also a duty to truth: the duty of that Reserve which will restrain us from thrusting the truth hastily and violently upon minds unprepared for it, and the Caution which takes pains

to insure that the truth we do impart shall be true subjectively, as well as objectively; that it shall be not only verbally true, but shall produce a true impression in the minds of our hearers. For instance, when we have to convey to some people the idea that the Bible is not exactly what they thought it, we must be careful not to convey at the same time the error that it is therefore nothing at all, or something much inferior in teaching and authority.

I have said that the danger of Anarchy is especially the danger of the less educated masses, but, indeed, who are the elect who shall wholly escape it? And if they did escape it, there lies ready for them another danger, that which I have called Intellectualism. This danger in its minor form has already been glanced at in the last chapter, in that quotation in which the Modernists deny the intention of setting up a dogmatic system in opposition to the system of the Church. Their denial is undoubtedly sincere. But it is very difficult for any human being who has really strong convictions to tolerate those who held, or still hold, what appears incredible to him. There is an illuminating sentence in Carlyle where he is describing the French Revolution at the height of its violence, and says that the strife and dashing together in that onward rush, was no longer that of bodies moving in opposite

directions, but of bodies moving in the same direction at different speeds. An impartial observer might detect something of the same phenomenon among advanced thinkers on religious and theological subjects; a certain impatience with those who are not ready to move forward as rapidly as themselves; a certain dogmatism and superiority of tone. A casual survey of religious history is enough to cool this impatience, to shake this dogmatism. Calvinism in its distinctive features has become practically incredible even in the religious bodies which owe their birth to it: the position formulated by the Athanasian Creed is incredible to a great many people in the Church of England to-day. But no one will maintain that there were not many good Christians, and even progressive Christians, among convinced Calvinists; no one can deny that there are many such among the steady upholders of every clause of the Athanasian Creed. It is perfectly true that dogmatism and intolerance are logically incompatible with the root principle of Modernism; but human beings are not always true to their principles, and intellectual pride is a subtle snare of the Devil. We shall have gained nothing if we get rid of 'Stand 'by thyself, for I am holier than thou,' and bring in 'Stand by thyself, for I am more intelligent 'and broad-minded than thou.'

It is, however, probable that this danger may

diminish as Modernism becomes less conscious of itself as an opposing force to established and reactionary authority, and more conscious of itself as a constructive force. But there is another aspect of Intellectualism which will always retain its attractions and its perils for minds aware of their own power and acuteness: that aspect which has been represented in the past by the confusion of Theology with Religion. The movement has hitherto been so much associated with scholarship and criticism, that there is some risk of its becoming identified with them in the minds of actors and spectators, until both alike fancy that the intellectual results of intellectual processes comprise the true end and purpose of the movement; and that the overthrow of historical and literary error and the ascertainment of historical and literary truth, are not merely the instruments of religious progress but Religion itself. Here again is a real and pressing danger. The mass of material for criticism has been piling up for so many centuries, that the intellectual task may easily appear to occupy the whole field. But Religion is the expression of belief in character and conduct. To formulate a dogma, or to criticise a dogma is a purely intellectual act which may be non-religious. The neglect of this truth is fatal to the spiritual growth of the individual and paralysing to his influence as a religious teacher.

Before we pass to the consideration of the other two dangers I have named, it is necessary to go a little deeper into the teaching of the Modernist school, and put before my readers what is really the foundation of the constructive part of their theory of Religion; namely, the principle that the true source and guarantee of Revelation is not objective historical fact, but religious experience: primarily the religious experience of the individual believer, then, with cumulative force, the religious experience common to a number of individuals; and in a supreme degree the collective religious experience of the Catholic Church, that is, of the whole body of faithful people. Of this experience dogma is the formulated expression, and is therefore (*a*) imperfect from the first as being an attempt to express spiritual truths in intellectual terms, and (*b*) liable to modification as the religious experience of mankind expands, and new spiritual needs arise. This is, I believe, a correct statement of the Modernist position. It may perhaps startle some of my readers; but that only means that it merits serious examination. There are two points at least to be considered: first, that it gives a correct account of the history of the development of Christian dogma; second, that it emphasises a truth which lies at the heart of Evangelical Religion. But while it contains important elements of truth, it does not appear

to cover the whole truth. The exclusive authority given to inward spiritual experience is necessitated by an extreme critical position of negation, or at least of suspense on the historical facts on which Christianity has hitherto professed to base itself. But the distinction between historical and dogmatic truth is too fine for the plain man, much too fine for the missionary at home or abroad, and thereby as a foundation or even as an element of the Catholic Faith it stands condemned. To quote Dr. Inge's words upon this subject: 'Surely it is possible to distinguish 'between those religious doctrines which are and 'must be inadequate, symbolic, more or less 'faulty representations, and those on which 'double-minded thinking is not legitimate. We 'have no language and no mental instrument 'wherewith to express the nature of God, and 'the truths of the eternal world. But as regards 'the earthly life of the Incarnate Son of God, we 'must fairly face the question whether Jesus of 'Nazareth was what He professed to be, and 'what the Society which He founded believed 'Him to be. We do not believe in two Christs '—one of them a Galilean prophet of "limited 'intelligence" and the other a half religious, half 'political organisation with a very chequered 'career.'[1]

Dr. Inge's striking utterance in this passage

[1] 'Faith and Knowledge,' p. 290.

is a sharp but not an unfair criticism of the Abbé Loisy's explicit teaching on this subject: and we must admit that the extreme Modernist position makes an unnecessary and, to the unexpert mind, an offensive separation between two kinds of truth, and limits almost irreverently God's power and choice of method in Revelation by its own conception of what is possible and impossible.

But without going further at present into the question whether the denial or disregard of external Revelation is compatible in theory with the continued existence of the Christian Religion as we know it hitherto, we may usefully consider what would be the practical results of such a doctrine if it came to be generally accepted. It must surely tend towards Individualism in Religion external and internal: an individualism which would tend to disintegrate the organised Society of believers, and to throw individual believers back upon themselves, to the guidance of their own inner experience, too often of their own emotions. If all Christians were full grown in the spiritual life, this would be less dangerous: but as it is, the chief work of the Church Militant here in Earth will always be the making of Christians: and for this end a Church, in the sense of a visible and organised fellowship, symbolised by common and continuous worship which makes its appeal to the soul through the senses and the intellect, is not only a convenient instru-

ment but a primary necessity. Father Tyrrell sees the danger and puts the case exactly in a passage of the 'Much Abused Letter.' In this he protests against the 'Psychological fallacies of 'Individualism in Religion. Like the musical 'or any other artistic or spiritual capacity, that 'of religion needs the educational influence of 'a widespread and permanent Society for its de-'velopment and progress: it needs its schools, 'its teachers, its great masters, its laymen and 'its experts, its traditions and rules and prin-'ciples and criteria. Moreover, in the measure 'that it takes the form of an universal and world-'wide society, a religion needs an organisation 'whereby its parts may be brought to bear on 'one another, and its ideas, desires and energies, 'scattered among millions, may be focussed to a 'point, and determined to a common resultant.'[1]

The necessity will not be disputed: but its possibility without an objective historical basis is more questionable. And that basis, as we conceive it, is the Life and Teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. If that is not *true*, in the plain man's sense of true, our common worship is meaningless and profane. And for our common life the Gospel read as an historical document is more than the frame; it is the design which is filled in with colour by the spiritual experience of believers. A religious system which dispenses

[1] 'A Much Abused Letter,' pp. 60, 61.

with that might conceivably found a Church such as Father Tyrrell describes, but it would not be the natural continuation and development of Historical Christianity as we know it, but a new thing built upon its ruins.

It would be a singular and tragic result if a movement which, on its hitherto less noticed social side, springs from the newly reawakened consciousness of universal brotherhood and mutual responsibility, should, on its more strictly religious side lead to anything like disintegration and chaos. Yet the seeds of that tendency are discernible, and it must be watched and guarded against.

Last, there is the form which the danger of over-emphasised individualism takes in the life and mind of the individual believer, where it may work in one of two ways according to temperament. Religion founded solely upon subjective experience tends to draw keen and enterprising intellects into extravagant speculations upon the nature of God and His relation to mankind; and such speculations do not remain purely intellectual forces, but react in the most unexpected manner on the character and conduct of their deviser and those who are influenced by him. This is the history of all heresies, and it explains why the Church has been driven from time to time into formulating definitions on abstruse points of belief, which appear trivial

and irritating to many people, when the practical danger they were to meet has been forgotten.

To a more timid and self-centred type of mind the same exaggerated subjectivity in Religion has other temptations. It offers nothing which can prevent them from being unduly immersed in the mystical aspect of religion: and they are in danger of lapsing into mere quietism, a refined and pious selfishness, which is apt to disregard the practical claims of duty to one's neighbour, while it dwells long and fondly on its own psychology, fully occupied in the search for new 'experience,' and the morbid analysis of spiritual sensations and emotions. I have no wish to disparage the beauty of the contemplative life, nor its usefulness as an element in the Christian society: but assuredly an unbalanced and introspective mysticism is very remote from the Religion which we understand Our Lord to have taught.

I have in this chapter deliberately emphasised the dangers of a movement with which I am largely in sympathy: for I consider that while these dangers are certainly exaggerated by its opponents, they are also unduly minimised by some of its enthusiastic supporters both abroad and in this country. I hope in my next chapter to show, that though the dangers are real, they are not of the essence of what I understand by Modernism, but arise from misuse and mis-

understanding of its true principles: and that it has a message for thoughtful and troubled Christians, of whom there are so many to-day: and perhaps will point out a way of escape from the position 'which is admittedly painful, 'and is becoming tragic.'

THE HOPE OF CHANGE[1]

In this chapter I must begin by asking of my readers a hard thing—that is, that they will dismiss from their minds as far as possible what has occupied so much of the two preceding chapters, namely, the accidental and external features of the movement we are considering, and the conditions in which it has arisen, and which have largely influenced its development: and concentrate their attention upon its essential and underlying idea. For instance, we shall try to abstract our thoughts for the moment from the accidental circumstances that Modernism has sprung up among the Clergy of the Roman Catholic Church in France and Italy; that it has brought them into sharp conflict with the Official rulers of their Church; that the bitterness of this conflict, and the existence of a large literature of criticism and research ready to their hands, has made it perhaps natural that they should adopt extreme sceptical conclusions on the historical aspects of religion, and that these conclusions in turn have forced them into a theological position which we may consider to be one-sided and unsatisfying. All

[1] Advent 1908.

these points have great interest and importance both for themselves, and for their bearing on larger issues; but for the present we will set them aside and ask, not 'What is Modernism,' but 'What is the Question which Modernism 'inevitably suggests to all earnest Christians?'

That Question presents itself in two aspects—Moral and Intellectual. The first may be stated in this form: Can the free exercise of Reason, the instrument with which man seeks Truth in all other fields, be blamable—that is, productive of error—when it is applied, not, observe, to the study of the Eternal Nature, but to those manifestations of it which fall within the limits of Time and Space?

An affirmative answer to this question has before now been given in explicit terms by theologians, and more frequently by implication and with some degree of periphrasis. It can be plausibly supported by texts drawn from St. Paul's Epistles, and by even higher Authority; and is often accompanied by warnings against the Pride of Intellect, and reminders of the limitation and fallibility of human powers. Now it is undeniable that a saving Faith is not dependent on the exercise of Reason in any high or technical degree: and no candid observer would maintain that the light of Reason has always been sufficient to keep mankind from error, even in secular and material inquiries: especially he would admit that

the application of the rules of logic to theological dogma has led to the most disastrous results. Yet the affirmation, made without reserve, leads us straight into the oldest and most persistent of heresies—the belief that God made the spirit of man, but the Devil made man's body and his mind, and that therefore the human intellect has a natural pravity which disables it for dealing even with the outward and visible embodiment of things spiritual. Second, it implies a conception of the nature and dealings of God which accepts the daring imagery of the Son of Imlah as a literal record of fact,[1] and is wholly at variance with a belief in the Fatherhood of God, which is one of the central ideas of the New Testament. And last, the renunciation of the use of Reason in the whole of this sphere involves us in a virtual agnosticism, which may remain undetected while documents and tradition are accepted with an unquestioning faith, but becomes terribly manifest and effective at the first breath of criticism. The position is, in fact, untenable as soon as it is attacked ; and the apparent arguments for it are met by the legal maxim, *Abusus non tollit usum.* The exercise of Reason in matters of such infinite importance must be guided and safeguarded with the most watchful care against misuse. It is an imperfect instrument ; and, in careless or dishonest hands, a dan-

[1] 1 Kings xxii. 19–22.

gerous one. Yet it remains true that accurate knowledge of the historical side of religious truth is not to be obtained except by the exercise of Reason. And it will hardly be maintained that a sound knowledge of Eternal Truth can best be attained through inaccurate knowledge of temporal.

If, then, the general principle be granted that a sincere and impartial pursuit of truth by the instrument which has been given to man is not contrary to the Will of God, but a way of attaining the knowledge of Him, there follows the particular question, which it may shock some of us even to hear stated, but which is being freely asked and confidently answered in the negative all about us—the question whether Christianity is compatible with the free use of Reason, or crumbles to nothing under the methods which are used successfully and acceptedly in other fields of inquiry, scientific, literary, and historical.

At this point I must pause to guard against a misconception which experience shows to be possible, but which is quite fatal to a candid examination of the case. It must not be assumed for a moment that a general sympathy such as I have expressed with the leaders of the Modernist movement necessarily implies substantial agreement with their most extreme conclusions, and with conclusions even more extreme, including

the whole of what is called the New Theology, whether that of Dr. Campbell or that of Sir Oliver Lodge; and the acceptance of those conclusions with complacency.

If it were possible for criticism to rob mankind of the Historical and Personal Christ, God the Son Incarnate as Jesus of Nazareth, the loss would be irreparable both to Religion and Morals. The cardinal doctrine of Human Salvation, the Atonement, embodied in the Life and Death of Christ would lose its meaning and reality. The mystery of Pain and Sorrow would remain for ever dark without the light which shines on it from the Passion of Our Lord. The most powerful and abiding motive which has made human creatures strive to be good, and lifted them above passion and self-interest and cowardice, would be removed. The alternative to Christianity is a profound and reasonable pessimism; the prospect of seeing the human race sink gradually under the dominion of a selfishness which at last defeats its own purposes.

If it were possible—but it is not possible. The Figure of Jesus Christ stands there incomparable, unassailable; fulfilling and transcending all that is truly best in human ideals, but rejecting much that they accept without question and prize most dearly; as far beyond the power of human criticism to destroy as it was beyond the power of human genius to create. Whatever account men

may give of the writers of the Gospels, they cannot endow them with the imagination to devise that Figure. 'Eye hath not seen, nor 'ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart 'of man to conceive the thing which God had 'prepared for them that love Him.'[1]

Nevertheless in the really devout study of the phenomena of the religious life of societies and individuals, the scientific spirit has its place which nothing else can fill. First it has the sublime task of examining for us with unflinching yet reverent scrutiny those writings in which we think we have Eternal Life: of ascertaining what they do indeed tell us of Him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. It is no longer maintained that the books of the New Testament have come down to us miraculously preserved from the errors of the scribe and the translator which befall other books, or wholly free from additions by hands other than the author's. To restore the original Text is in the highest sense a work of piety, but it can only be done by the methods of the scholar. And when we pass from the Scriptures to the history of the external development of Christian Institutions and Christian Doctrine, the spirit of criticism vindicates its claim to an unfettered exercise of Reason in the search for Truth, and has its twofold work, destructive and constructive.

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 9.

It is important, however, that the word destructive in this connection should not be misunderstood; for the misunderstanding may have a deadly effect on the mind and temper both of the expert and of those who hear him and read him. Strictly speaking, it is not the business of Science to destroy at all, only to examine and classify and analyse, and generally to put things in their right place and proportion; in natural science, for instance, to put hypotheses which were once taken for absolute and final truth in their right place as relative and provisional; and in the history of Religion to put in their right place human and temporal elements which have been acclaimed as Eternal and Divine. The indwelling life of a Church expresses itself outwardly in Dogmas and Institutions. In a living Church, as in any living organism, the outward expression will continually develop and be modified to meet the needs of a continuous inner growth. But in Religion there appears a contrary tendency, an attempt to arrest growth at a certain point, and to accept dogma and institutions at a particular stage as the complete and ultimate expression of Eternal Truth. Every generation of men is naturally inclined thus to regard its own 'ortho-'doxy' as final and absolute, and that not in religious matters only. And in Religion this Orthodoxy almost invariably professes to found itself upon the model of some particular stage of

belief and practice in the past. The official standard of the Church of Rome is the Scholastic Theology of the Middle Ages as it was formally sanctioned by the Council of Trent, together with a hierarchical organisation which is alleged to have come down unchanged from the time of the Apostles. The appeal of our own Church is in doctrine rather to the Theology of the Fourth Century expressed in the Nicene Creed; but our official conception of Church government does not differ much in theory from that of the Church of Rome, though in practice it is widely different. But it is not the Church of Rome and the Church of England alone that are bound by the static conception of Orthodoxy. All organised Religion is still deeply imbued with the fundamental fallacy of Scholasticism, the belief that Divine Truth can be fully and finally expressed in intellectual forms valid for all time and for all possible development of spiritual needs; and in fact has been so expressed in the formulas of the religious body in which choice or circumstance has placed the orthodox Christian. Some of the Protestant Churches which have risen since the Reformation are even more enslaved to terminology and logic than the devout student of Thomas Aquinas.

And still, in spite of the most searching discipline, in spite of the narrowest doctrinal swathings, the spiritual growth does go on, gradual

and irresistible. The attempt to stop it is impracticable; but if it is ignored and thwarted, it will proceed, not along the normal lines of development, but violent and distorted. It is to an unhistoric view of dogmas and institutions that we owe the indiscriminating denials and contemptuous or passionate revolts which alarm and disquiet earnest believers to-day. An impartial study which regards them, not in the light of controversial preconceptions, but in their true historical perspective will show that the externals of Religion have altered in every age, that they have always borne the impress of the general mental habits of their own age; and that this is not only inevitable but desirable, for thus the men of every age have heard the Church 'speak in their own tongue the wonderful works 'of God.'

It will be a real service to Christianity if such study helps men to realise that while Truth is one and unchangeable, yet the intellectual forms of one century cannot be wholly adequate to express the religious life and thought of another, any more than they can express its scientific thought; and so compel us to translate our belief, from old forms whose meaning is lost or blurred, into new forms which enable us really to understand and appropriate it.

But the intellectual grasp of Truth is not the whole of Religion; indeed, in our Lord's own

teaching the social side occupies perhaps the larger space. The free and frank historical treatment of Christian institutions is in some ways even more important than the historical treatment of Christian doctrines. The need is doubtless most apparent in the Church of Rome, where the Modernists are feeling the cruel pressure of a perfect machinery of discipline, which has more savour of statecraft than of Religion. But our own Church also still bears much of the outward form of the Feudal System, and has not parted by any means with the last remnant of the feudal spirit; and even the Free Churches have hardly kept abreast of the march of social democracy. This may seem a strange saying—but it is true that no Church has kept its place as a leader of human progress; and that the working classes who hold the power in their hands to-day tend to withdraw from all forms of institutional Christianity.

One cause of this withdrawal is that it is impossible to preach Christianity effectively in the language of Feudalism to people whose life is set in an atmosphere of Democracy. Institutions like doctrines have in the past fitted themselves to the age in which they came into being in order that through them the Church might teach the Age.

Now a calm and impartial study of historical phenomena, which is at present the one vital principle of Modernism, would clear away much

of the misunderstanding which leads to controversy. It would induce a wide tolerance of difference in externals, by giving them their right order and proportion, and might lead, even before men expected it, to agreement on externals, and to the reunion of a great Catholic Church firmly united upon essentials, and organised on lines of true Apostolic succession, the normal development of a past now fully known and understood. There is the desire of reunion in many hearts to-day; but the Churches are kept apart by misunderstanding of their own position and the position of others. If the true facts, of which the misreading underlies our divisions, could be known beyond controversy, it might be that to know all would be to pardon all.

And now let us turn for a little while to the constructive work which lies still in the future, yet to be built on the foundation of a stern intellectual sincerity in the search for all Truth which lies within man's reach. The age needs two things which may appear at first sight very different and even contrary.

First, a Theology which shall attract and satisfy the educated twentieth century mind, as the Theologies of the past have satisfied the best intellects of their day. 'We lack,' says Father Tyrrell, 'theological experts competent to shape 'a scientific expression of revelation which shall

'be in harmony with correct knowledge and modes 'of thought. To demand harmony between things 'of a totally different order, between prophetic and 'scientific truth, is absurd. But between scientific 'truth and the scientific expression of prophetic 'truth we have a right to demand harmony. The 'theology which cannot effect it is bankrupt.'

It is a forcible, even a brutal statement of a terrible possibility, which should fill Christians with concern but not with despair. Christianity has satisfied in times past the demands of the most able and the most delicate intellects, the Pharisee, the Philosopher, the Statesman, the man of Science, and there is no ground for thinking that in these last days a whole race of virtuous and intelligent men has arisen to whom its saving truths have no meaning or obligation. Only the Church must speak to them in their own tongue, the language of those who will not hold as true anything within the sphere of human observation or research which they cannot prove to be true. The Christian apologist of to-day must resolve to be all things to all men, and remember that the things seen are temporal but the things not seen are eternal, and then he may be sure if he has faith and sympathy, that a synthesis will be found to reconcile scientific truth and the scientific expression of prophetic truth.

Second, we want a simple faith within reach of the simplest, not only such as, but actually the

faith which Jesus taught. We cannot afford to alienate and lose the intelligence of mankind at a time when intellectual interest in religious questions is spreading wider day by day. But the intellect is chiefly concerned with the external and phenomenal aspects of religion. The root of the matter is Faith, needed by all, and as we believe offered to all, but especially to the poor and the simple, sufficient for salvation, and prior both spiritually and historically to intellectual developments. Here surely the Modernist principle even more plainly helps us, not by rudely dashing down the superstructure of dogma and institutions in which generations of Christians have lived and died through so many centuries, but by showing them in their true perspective, as useful and necessary for their time, but always relative and liable to modification, thus showing by contrast the simplicity and permanence of the essential element in Religion which has been common to the real Christians of all those generations. 'The 'Truths by which you really live and grow are 'few and simple, and too fundamental to be in- 'volved in the fate of anything so contingent as a 'theological system. Even what is most charac- 'teristically Christian and Catholic in the lives of 'the greatest saints has but little dependence on 'the complexities of ecclesiastical teachings and 'ordinances, and as a fact obtained among the 'Apostles and first disciples of Christ generations

'before the said complexities were called into 'existence.'[1]

With these last words from the writings of the great Modernist whom I have so often quoted, I will leave this brief review of the history of Modernism, its dangers and its hopes. I do not forget that it has an ugly side, that there is much in it which appears offensive, or at least unnecessary and rash, to thousands of devout Christians, to all of us, in fact, who by God's blessing are able still to interpret the old formulas so that they meet the needs and conditions of our religious life; and so are passing insensibly and without a violent break from the old world of thought to the new. But we especially must remember that there are other thousands for whom this is not possible; men and women, weary and heavy laden, who are losing their faith, and being lost to the Church for want of a statement and interpretation of Divine Truth in 'their own tongue.' This statement and interpretation the Modernists are sincerely and courageously trying to give, and their chosen method is to bring men through truth to truth.

Surely it is our part to give them sympathy if we cannot give them help; or at the very least to follow the counsel of the wise Gamaliel, 'Refrain

[1] 'A Much Abused Letter,' p. 67.

'from these men and let them alone; for if this 'counsel and work be of man it will come to 'naught, but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow 'it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against 'God.'

NOTES ON ST. JOHN VI.[1]

1. The Gospel of St. John displays in a far higher degree than any of the Synoptics a deliberate literary unity and purpose. This tendency is already discernible in the First and Third Gospels; and in St. Luke especially there is plain evidence of selection in his use of the documents which he had before him, and of purposeful arrangement in his fitting of the Logia into the historical framework of the Ministry. Such a treatment is only to be expected if the author of the Third Gospel was indeed the companion of St. Paul, and writing under the influence of the Pauline Christology; and, indeed, it is clearly foreshadowed in the preface to the Gospel.[2] But in spite of the influence of a developing theology, and the conditions which allowed a wide liberty in the handling of materials, the Gospel remains, like the other Synoptics, primarily a record of events within the limits of time and space, intended, indeed, to suggest to the candid reader certain conclusions, but for the most part left to *suggest* them; the conclusions are not formulated in detail, nor is the nature of

[1] January 1909.

[2] Luke i. 1–4.

their connection with the Eternal Order explicitly stated. The document is essentially historical rather than theological.

When we turn to the Fourth Gospel all this is changed. Its theme is the Eternal, not the temporal. The whole Gospel is transfigured by the light of the Prologue,[1] and may indeed be regarded as an expansion of it. Its purpose is summed up by the writer himself in the words, 'These [things] 'are written that ye might believe that Jesus is 'the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing 'ye might have life through His Name.'[2] There is a corresponding change in the character of the utterances which are recorded as coming from Our Lord's lips. Instead of parables and brief practical counsels of daily life and conduct, there are here long and often difficult discourses, put in the form of allegory, and dealing with the spiritual relation between Christ and the believer. In the Synoptics religion is chiefly viewed as affecting the relation between man and man. In St. John it appears chiefly as the relation of man to God.

This purpose, definite and in a high degree intellectual, has moulded the writer's style. His narrative is no series of isolated events which are left to the reader to co-ordinate and explain, but is skilfully woven together in an ordered design, in which the events are subordinated to the teaching, and used with deliberate art to

[1] John i. 1–14. [2] John xx. 31.

enforce and illustrate it. The Gospel thus falls into sections which do not always coincide with the chapter divisions of our Bible. In each section the essential element for the author's purpose is one of the Christological discourses; while the incidents and human personalities introduced give the dramatic setting which impresses and elucidates the lesson. To acknowledge so much does not make it at all necessary to suppose that incidents or persons are unhistorical, or that the chronological order has been violated; it only makes it clear that each section, if it is to be understood, must be read as a whole, and interpreted as a whole by the light of its several parts.

Of such a section the sixth chapter is a characteristic instance, complete in all its parts, discourse, incidents, personalities; as will appear from a brief analytic consideration of the chapter.

Verses 1–15 describe the miracle of the Feeding of the Five Thousand, followed in verse 16 by the withdrawal from the offer of earthly kingship which showed a misunderstanding of Christ's mission and claim. Then in verses 17–21 comes the miracle of Walking on the Sea, which has a less obvious connection with the main theme of the sixth chapter than the other miracle. Its bearing, however, is indicated by Dr. Westcott in a note on the whole passage, 1–21, which is too long to quote here; but it may be observed

that this second sign is especially addressed to the Apostles, who were, indeed, troubled and alarmed by it (v. 19), while the first was intended rather for the multitude. Next, in verses 22–25, the people follow Jesus to Capernaum, and are rebuked by Him for the materialism and selfishness of their belief (v. 26). With this rebuke begins the long and highly mystical discourse upon the Bread from Heaven, which St. John tells us was spoken in the synagogue at Capernaum. This discourse, with numerous interposed verses which show the feeling with which it was received, continues to the end of verse 59. Our Lord in it declares Himself to be the Bread from Heaven, which in the earlier verses He had promised to those who believe on Him (vv. 32, 35, 51), and speaks of the Bread as His Flesh (v. 51), and as His Flesh and Blood (v. 53); which duly received identify the believer with Christ (v. 56), and confer on him the gift of Eternal Life (v. 54), here definitely including Immortality (vv. 39, 54); an idea which is emphasised by the repeated parallel and contrast with the Manna (vv. 31, 49, 58). The hearers are represented as of two classes, those in whom sincere and earnest inquiry (vv. 28, 30) leads to the desire of acceptance (v. 34); and others, specified as the 'Jews,' who were simply puzzled and offended both by the claim (v. 42), and by the form in which it was expressed (v. 52). The

remainder of the chapter records the effect of the discourse upon the minds of the 'disciples,' in whom it caused perplexity (v. 60), and in some cases desertion of the Master (v. 66); and its effect upon the Twelve. They are not described as understanding it, but as accepting it by an effort of faith (vv. 68, 69). One of them, however, is excepted by Christ from the number of the faithful (vv. 64, 70), and named by the Evangelist.

We have here, then, a typical section of St. John, with the discourse for its centre; the incidents of the two miracles, one definitely, the other less obviously, illustrating and enforcing its lesson: and a number of human personalities—Philip, Andrew, the multitude, the earnest inquirers, the 'Jews,' the 'disciples,' St. Peter and the Twelve, Judas Iscariot; all examples of that Johannine conception of the Judgment of Christ by which men and women are made to justify or condemn themselves by accepting or rejecting the Incarnate Word of God.

How, then, are we to interpret this chapter? The reader will, of course, be familiar with the traditional interpretation which makes it refer directly to the Holy Eucharist, and depends upon the striking coincidences of thought and language with what we find in the Words of Institution, and in the Pauline teaching on the Sacrament in the First Epistle to the Corinthians.[1] A less

[1] 1 Cor. xi. 20 foll.

cogent, but by no means negligible argument in the same direction is the absence of any other reference to the Sacrament in St. John's Gospel. It is at least highly improbable that there should have been no such reference in a work of this kind, written within the limits of date assigned to the Fourth Gospel by the extreme views, orthodox and critical. But even if it be granted that such reference was to be expected, it is still desirable, before proceeding, to take into consideration the divergent opinions which are held upon the authorship and date of the Fourth Gospel, because in a passage like this interpretation must be largely influenced by the view taken of the nature and origin of the document to be interpreted. It will not, however, be necessary to go far into the labyrinth of Johannine criticism. The question of authorship, as Dr. Sanday tells us in his book on the Criticism of the Fourth Gospel, 'is broadly between a member of the 'apostolic generation and one who was in no 'connection with it.' The extreme limits of date which can seriously be maintained are A.D. 90 and A.D. 140. It is clear that the conclusion which a student accepts on these two points will have a notable effect upon his estimate of the value and meaning of the sixth chapter. For the immediate purpose of this paper, it is not necessary, as it is not possible at present, to decide between the conflicting opinions. According to

either opinion, this passage presents its difficulties of interpretation, and offers its probabilities, which may or may not amount to conviction.

If, as the 'orthodox' school maintains, the writer was indeed the 'beloved disciple,' whether the son of Zebedee, or, as Dr. Sanday suggests, another and a younger follower of Jesus, then the words recorded in this chapter represent to us at least his recollection of an authentic utterance of Our Lord. In this connection it is often argued that it would be impossible for the actual words of long discourses to be reproduced by memory after so great an interval. The difficulty is a serious one; and it is likely that the verbal form and arrangement is often the evangelist's own. But it is worth while to consider the special circumstances of the case before rejecting the historical value of the Gospel even in details. According to all tradition its author took no active part in the evangelisation of the Roman world, but passed his life in quiet and in meditation on the sacred events and sayings which he afterwards set himself to record—and he was writing with that strange memory of extreme old age which recalls in curious detail the events of years long past, and forgets the happenings of yesterday. It is not, then, extravagant to believe that we have here before us the substance, and what is essential of the form, of the words Our Lord said that day in the synagogue at Caper-

naum. A belief in their authenticity at once gives rise to a question of their interpretation—the question whether they have a direct bearing on the Holy Eucharist or not.

Dr. Rashdall, in a sermon which insists profitably on the spiritual aspect of the Sacrament,[1] answers definitely in the negative. 'It is impossible,' he says, 'to doubt that the original meaning of the words . . . can have had no direct reference to that Sacrament. The words must surely have meant something, must have been intended to mean something to the disciples then and there, quite independently of a rite which was not yet instituted. And in truth we are not left to any doubtful conjecture as to what the Master meant by these words. They are expressly explained by His reply (a few verses later) to the disciples' remark upon the hardness of the saying, "The words that I have spoken "unto you are spirit and are life."'

Now in the first place the Gospels, and not St. John only, are full of sayings which the disciples heard and remembered, but did not understand, and presumably were not intended to understand 'then and there.' In St. John Our Lord plainly promised a progressive revelation which is as plainly discernible in the Apostles after His Ascension. Then Dr. Rashdall seems, if it is respectful to say so, to take his profit of the critical and non-

[1] *Christus in Ecclesia*, pp. 33, 34.

critical position alike. He accepts the record as authentic for the purposes of his argument, and yet postulates a most narrow limitation of forethought and foreknowledge in Our Lord. Also he proves too much. If the teaching is perfectly simple and obvious, if 'My Flesh and Blood' merely means 'My Words,' why is it put in a form so unintelligible that it perplexed and drove away many who heard it; and has misled generations of Christians from that day to this? And among those who were misled must be counted the writer of the Gospel. It is hardly credible that writing when he did he should have missed so obvious an application of this 'hard saying'; or that if he knew it to be a false application he should not have noted and corrected it.

This last argument, which is only a subsidiary one for students who hold the more conservative view, gains overwhelming force if the extreme critical position be adopted as to the date and historical authority of the Gospel. If it is indeed, as some scholars consider, a 'Theological 'Romance' written for edification, with a strong ecclesiastical tendency: not in any sense historical in its record of events and sayings, but reflecting accurately the religious consciousness of the Church, or of some part of the Church; then the Eucharistic application of this chapter appears to be unquestionable, and its importance as a document for the history of the Eucharistic

teaching of the Early Church can hardly be over-estimated. Dr. Sanday has demonstrated that its date cannot possibly be fixed later than the first half or even the first quarter of the second century ;[1] and points out that if it emerged so late as 130 or 140 A.D., without the support of undoubted authority, its general acceptance would constitute a difficulty more serious than any which results from the traditional view of its origin. Let it be taken, however, as belonging to the first half of the second century, and the work of a writer who had no connection with the apostolic generation, but had an accurate knowledge of the ecclesiastical politics and interests of his own day.

If the key words of this chapter were composed for the first time when their writer and his readers already had the Synoptic Gospels and the Epistles of Paul before them, they can only have been intended and taken in one sense ; and the whole chapter becomes a tractate on the Eucharist in an early *Summa Theologiæ*. Read in this sense it gives curious and interesting evidence of the doctrine and practice of the stage in the Church's history which it represents. It implies—

(*a*) The importance of the Eucharist in the primitive Church, as the central and essential Act of Worship, and as the pledge and test of full membership.

[1] 'Criticism of the Fourth Gospel,' p. 338.

(*b*) The existence of something not unlike what is called High Sacramental Doctrine from the earliest times.

(*c*) The existence, also from very early times, of hostile criticism of that doctrine, both without and within the Church, and on the various grounds that it was too mystical, and too materialistic.

This is a bare outline of the conditions indicated. The writer deals with them allegorically, and in detail, as may be shown from a consideration of the text of the chapter. It is not necessary to interpret the Feeding of the Five Thousand with all the fantastic symbolism which pious imaginations have discovered in it; the sacramental teaching in it is obvious when it is read with the rest of the chapter: and appears especially in verse 11, where the bread over which the Lord has given thanks—note the word εὐχαριστήσας—is given first to the disciples, and by them to the multitude, sufficing miraculously for the bodily wants of all, as the Body and Blood of the Lord suffice for the spiritual wants of all believers. In the refusal of earthly kingship, and the rebuke to the multitude, the charge of materialism is repelled, and the danger of its realisation guarded against. The miracle of Walking on the Sea holds its place as a special sign to the inner circle of believers, which justifies their acceptance of the doc-

trine of the Bread from Heaven with all its difficulties.

To pass, then, from incidents to persons: Philip and Andrew are the ministers who provide the natural matter of the Sacrament, and obeying the Master in faith, where reason would have despaired or rebelled, are rewarded by a miracle. The multitude represent the mass of mankind, or rather that part of it which is brought under the influence of Christianity; among whom the elect are brought to belief, the rest repelled. The Jews are wilful and obstinate objectors, who deny the Divinity of Christ (v. 42) and coarsely misrepresent the Sacramental teaching of the Church (v. 52). The offended disciples of verses 60 and 66 are those within the Church, or desiring to become members of it, who found insurmountable difficulties in its Sacramental teaching and departed or drew back from it. Finally, the sound orthodox Christians find their counterpart in the Twelve.

It is too early to suspect in the special mention of St. Peter any hint of the claims for which his name has stood in later ages; he is still simply, what he is in the Synoptic Gospels as well as in St. John, the spokesman of his brethren. There remains the double reference to Judas Iscariot. An imaginative student might read in it a thinly veiled condemnation of some eminent leader of the Church in the writer's own time who had

fallen into heretical opinions on the doctrine of the Sacrament. Such a speculation may well terminate an analysis of the extreme sceptical view of the date and authorship of the Gospel, a view which certainly raises as many difficult problems as it solves.

It has probably occurred already to some of my readers that the two possible aspects of the Gospel as a source of knowledge which I have here contrasted are not in fact incompatible, but are consistent with a single view of the authenticity of the document. If Dr. Sanday's view, that the Gospel was written in the last quarter of the first century by one who had been a follower of Our Lord, be accepted, it will have a double value. It will have primary historical value as an authentic record of Our Lord's Life and of the substance of His Sayings, transfigured perhaps by the fuller knowledge of years of spiritual intercourse with Him; but essentially true and essentially His; and it will have secondary historical value as a true reflection of the mind of the Church at Ephesus between 80 and 100 A.D. We should not, of course, compare the two values: there is no question which we should sacrifice if we had to sacrifice one or other. But because we prize the first, there is no reason why we should neglect the second. If it so be that even a sacred document has a story of its own to tell us, over and above

the more precious message that its Author intended it to tell us, we are not forbidden to read it. And in this secondary way the books of the New Testament, and especially St. John's Gospel, written when it was written, have much to tell us as to the life and doctrine of the Church in the first century, a period for which we have practically no other documents.

THE EARLIEST PREACHING[1]

The book called the Acts of the Apostles contains the record or summary of a considerable number of discourses attributed to the Apostles and preachers of Christianity in the years immediately following our Lord's Ascension.

Thus in the first section of the book (Acts i.–viii., ix. 32–xii. 24), which may be conveniently distinguished as the Acts of St. Peter, five speeches of that Apostle are recorded, viz. :—

Acts ii. 14–36. To the multitude assembled at Pentecost.
„ iii. 12–26. To the people after the healing of the impotent man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple.
„ iv. 8–12. Before the high priest.
„ x. 34–43. To Cornelius and his friends at Cæsarea.
„ xi. 5–17. To the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem.

There is also the speech of Stephen (vii. 2–53).

In the second section of the book (ix. 1–31, xii. 24–end), the Acts of St. Paul, there are nine speeches, all from Paul, viz. :—

Acts xiii. 16–41. To the Jews at Antioch in Pisidia.
„ xiv. 15–17. To the natives of Lystra.

[1] January 1909.

Acts xvii. 22–31. To the Athenians on Mars Hill.
„ xx. 18–35. At Miletus to the Elders of the Ephesian Church.
„ xxii. 1–21. To the Jews from the steps of the Castle Antonia.
„ xxiii. 1–6. Before the Sanhedrin.
„ xxiv. 10–21. Before Felix at Cæsarea.
„ xxvi. 2–23. Before Agrippa and Bernice.
„ xxviii. 17–20; 25–28. To the Jews at Rome.

The fourth of these speeches of Paul is *pastoral*, the fifth, sixth, and seventh are *forensic* in their occasion and tone, and they may perhaps be set aside for our present purpose. The remainder, together with the speeches of Peter and Stephen, are almost entirely missionary and apologetic; and, so far as they are authentic, should furnish a source from which can be recovered the essential outlines of the Gospel which was presented to the world in the first century.

The literary conventions of that age, and the circumstances in which some of these discourses are reported as being spoken, make it highly improbable that in all or indeed in any of them we have a *verbatim* report of what was actually said. But if Luke was the author of the Acts, a view to which critics are returning, then strong personal devotion would have helped his memory to retain the words of Paul; and as he was actually present on some of the occasions recorded, he may have depended not on recollection only, but on

written notes. He would also have had the opportunity of obtaining information from persons who had heard Peter and Stephen speak. On the other hand, the significance of these earliest sermons does not depend altogether on maintaining the Lucan authorship. Even if the writer had not a first-hand knowledge of the events which he is describing, and followed the example of Thucydides and Tacitus in putting into the mouths of his characters speeches composed by himself which he considered suitable for the occasion, the matter of them still indicates what he held to be the burden of the Church's message to the world. The method and content of the preaching represented suggest an early date. It shows a simple theology, an undeveloped metaphysic, and a striking absence of ecclesiastical requirements in contrast with indications which may be found in the Fourth Gospel. A later writer would probably have reflected at least some broken lights of the Gnostic controversy; and although there are clear signs of the struggle of Christianity to free itself from the bonds of Judaic thought and worship, it is not unhistorical to regard that struggle as beginning potentially from the very day of Pentecost, and indeed earlier, though it was doubtless in great measure as the result of the action and teaching of Paul that the opposition became defined and acute. Nor is there any indication of that later stage of

Christian orthodoxy when circumcision and the observance of the Law actually excluded from the Church. To the writer of the Acts the Jews are still the chosen people, the children of the Kingdom, to whom as by right the word must first be preached; and the invectives of vii. 51, xiii. 46, and xxviii. 25, take their force and meaning from the privileged position of those to whom they were addressed.

These considerations make it especially interesting to the Christian student at a time when the later developments of doctrine are being subjected to the solvent criticism of modern scholarship, to examine these early discourses with a view of discovering, in the elements common to all of them, what things were accounted necessary for salvation by the men to whom, humanly speaking, we reckon that the world owes the Christian Religion. A comparison of the passages which are cited above shows that the element which is common to them all and central in them all is the belief in the Resurrection not merely as a historical fact,[1] but as the mark of God's acceptance and approval, the proof that Jesus was the Christ and the fulfilment of the Messianic Hope. On that belief is founded a summons to mankind which is really a repetition and expansion of the warning cry of John the Baptist: 'Repent ye, for the Kingdom

[1] See Harnack's Note on p. 85 of vol. i. of his 'History of Dogma.' English Translation.

'of Heaven is at hand,' with a sanction apparently different in form, but identical in substance, the divine claim of Jesus Christ. Dr. Harnack, in his 'History of Dogma,' expresses the change and the identity in these words: 'As 'the Kingdom of God which was announced had 'not yet visibly appeared, as the appeal to the 'Spirit could not be separated from the appeal to 'Jesus as the Messiah, and as there was actually 'nothing possessed but the reality of the Person 'of Jesus, so in preaching all stress must neces-'sarily fall on this Person. To believe in Him 'was the decisive fundamental requirement, and '(at first under the presuppositions of the religion 'of Abraham and the Prophets) the sure guarantee 'of salvation. It is not surprising then to find 'that in the earliest Christian preaching Jesus 'Christ comes before us as frequently as the 'Kingdom of God in the preaching of Jesus 'Himself. The Image of Jesus and the power 'which proceeded from it were the things which 'were really possessed. Whatever was expected 'was expected only from Jesus, the exalted and 'returning One. The proclamation that the 'Kingdom of Heaven is at hand must therefore 'become the proclamation that Jesus is the Christ, 'and that in Him the revelation of God is com-'plete. He who lays hold of Jesus, lays hold in 'Him of the grace of God and of a full salvation.'[1]

[1] "History of Dogma," vol. i. p. 80.

This central idea of the Risen and Glorified Christ is expressed and enforced in various ways according to the character of the audience, and the aspect of divine power and human need which is prominent in the mind of the speaker.

1. When the Resurrection is presented to devout Jews as the fulfilment of the Messianic Hope, the declaration is based upon citations from the Psalms and the Prophetic books; and more largely upon the whole history of Israel. This is notably the case in Peter's first address to the multitude on the day of Pentecost, in which he quotes Ps. xvi. 8–11 as referring to the Resurrection, Ps. cxxxii. 11 for the Messiahship, and Ps. cx. 1 for the Exaltation of Jesus. The same conviction that the whole of the Old Testament foreshadows and leads up to Jesus Christ explains the long epitome of the history of the Nation which—strangely to modern minds—occupies nearly the whole of Stephen's defence of his religion and his life before a hostile court of his fellow-countrymen. And this summary and its application are paralleled in Paul's first recorded speech to the Jews at Antioch in Pisidia. The same feeling is clearly shown in the interesting early Christian hymn (Acts ii. 24–30), which partly consists of quotations from the Old Testament, especially from Ps. ii.; and it is explicitly stated by Paul in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, 'For I delivered unto you that

'which I also received, how that Christ died for 'our sins *according to the Scriptures;* and that he 'was buried, and that he rose again the third day '*according to the Scriptures.*'[1]

Now this use of the prophetic writings and of the history of the Jewish people, which might have been regarded by the pedantic scepticism of a generation back as arbitrary and even ignorant, gains intense significance and value from the most modern Biblical science, which teaches us to regard the Old Testament as a record of the progressive revelation of God—a revelation whose stages were marked and caused by successive prophetic utterances, and which finds its consummation and fulfilment in the Person and Teaching of Jesus Christ. At the same time it might appear at first sight as if a Revelation so based upon the Old Testament had meaning and application only to those who could claim a right in the Law and the Prophets, that the Fulfilment was granted only to those to whom the promises were made, and that Salvation in Christ was for the Jew only.

2. But a larger comprehension of Prophecy and History in the light of their Fulfilment abolished the danger of narrowness or exclusiveness in their application. As Dr. Harnack says: 'The searching in the Scriptures of the Old 'Testament, that is, in the prophetic texts, had

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4. See also Acts ii. 32.

'already, in estimating the Person and dignity 'of Christ, given an important impulse towards 'transcending the framework of the idea of the 'theocracy completed solely in and for Israel. '. . . The missionary work among the Gentiles, 'so soon begun and so rich in results, threw a 'new light on the range of Christ's purpose and 'work, and led to the consideration of its signi-'ficance to the whole human race.'[1]

This larger range is first definitely indicated in the Acts by the vision which sent Peter to Cæsarea to 'keep company and come unto one 'of another nation'; it is recognised in his address to Cornelius and his friends, which does not begin with Abraham and the Prophets, but immediately with Jesus, after the significant prologue that 'God is no respecter of persons, 'but *in every nation* he that feareth him and 'worketh righteousness is accepted of him.' The truth of this new conception of the apostolic mission is emphatically confirmed by the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Gentile converts, which is accepted by Peter as justifying their immediate admission into the society of believers by the rite of Baptism—the 'inward spiritual grace' having been directly conferred by God, 'the 'outward visible sign could not be withheld by man.'

The same idea is carried out in the speeches

[1] "History of Dogma," p. 82.

of St. Paul at Lystra and at Athens, where he unhesitatingly bases his appeal, not upon the Jewish Scriptures, but upon the religious instinct, which he recognises as existent and as true within its limitations. In the first case it is to the simplest form of Natural Religion that he appeals, and asks his hearers to 'turn to the living God 'who . . . left not himself without witness in 'that he did good and gave us rain from heaven 'and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food 'and gladness.' At Athens he strives to reach the sound principle of the Fear of God, which underlay a decadent, polytheistic creed with its magnificent and complicated ceremonial.

3. The preaching of the Risen and Glorified Christ naturally directed the minds of the Apostles to meditation upon the nature of His relation to God the Father, and upon the mutual relation of the Divine and human elements in Him. The Christology of the Acts is still tentative and undeveloped. For systematic theory, consciously and deliberately worked out, we must go to the Epistles. There are, however, present in these speeches intimations of special aspects of the Exaltation of Jesus Christ, varying in content and expression according to the spiritual need of the moment, but not mutually inconsistent, which amount in sum to the full Pauline conception of the Divine Sonship. The whole primitive Christology is substantially contained in the first

public utterance of Peter on the day of Pentecost. He begins with the human nature (ii. 22): 'Jesus 'of Nazareth, a *man approved of God* among you 'by miracles and wonders and signs, which God 'did by him in the midst of you,' and leads his hearers by the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the Eternal Kingship to the conclusion which is not stated in words, but implied by the Titles which at each stage are given to Christ, and by the contrast drawn between Him and the King and Patriarch David. The significant passages are verse 27: 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; 'neither wilt thou suffer thine *Holy One* to see 'corruption,' taken with verses 29–31; verses 33–35, including the application of the words, 'The Lord said unto my Lord'; and the end of verse 36, 'God hath made that same Jesus 'whom ye crucified both *Lord* and *Christ*.' It would not be wise to attach doctrinal importance to the word in iii. 13, which the A.V. translates 'Son,' the R.V. 'servant'; but in the next verse there is a new Title, frequently repeated afterwards, '*The Just* or Righteous'; and in verse 15 a further stage is reached in the Title, 'The *Prince* '*of Life*.' Finally in the preaching to the Gentiles (x. 36) is found the emphatic and unqualified assertion, 'He is *Lord of all*.' The vision of Stephen in chapter vii. illustrates graphically the conception of the glory which existed in the minds of believers, though its content has

already been expressed by Peter. Paul represents Christ as the *Son*, quoting from Ps. ii., 'Thou art 'My Son, to-day have I begotten thee' (xiii. 33); and as the *Judge* (xvii. 31), and that not to Jews, familiar with the idea of a Judgment, but to the cultivated and sceptical Athenians.

4. This Judgment of the World by Christ is placed, not in the remote future, nor even at the end of the individual life, but is to be looked for daily and hourly in a visible and universal form. The approach of the Kingdom, with its urgent call to repentance, was for the first generation of Christians unquestionably the eagerly expected return of the Lord within a few years at most.[1] The belief in an early Parousia exercised a dominant influence both on their teaching and on their conduct; and for the thoughtful Christian of later ages the non-fulfilment of the expectation gives to the appeals based on it an air of unreality, which is only partially removed by substituting for the idea of a visible Parousia that other idea which we find in St. John's Gospel, and which may belong to the end of his life, when men already began to say, 'The Lord delayeth his 'coming'—the idea of an abiding Presence which in itself passes judgment on those who accept or reject it: 'He that believeth not is condemned 'already.' These considerations, however, lie

[1] 1 Cor. xx. 51, 52, but the thought is everywhere present in the Acts and Epistles.

beyond the limits of the present inquiry. The important thing is that the student of the 'Earliest 'Preaching' should fully recognise the presence of this belief in the minds of the preachers, and allow for its influence as a factor in the presentment and acceptance of the primitive Gospel.

5. So far the Message has been regarded chiefly in its teaching about the Person and attributes of Christ. It remains to consider it in its relation to the needs and problems of human life and nature.

The call to repentance postulates the fact of Sin, and implies a promise of escape from Sin in its twofold aspect, deliverance from the guilt of past Sin—that is, forgiveness; and deliverance from the power of Sin in the present and future —that is, holiness. To the passionate belief in the reality and power of the Resurrection Sin appears as a negation, as blindness to that reality, refusal of that power; and so it is cancelled by the apprehension and the acceptance of them. Accordingly it is to be observed that the insistence on the fact of Sin, and the consequent prominence given to the Death on the Cross regarded as a Sacrifice for Sin, which has so strongly influenced the later theology of the Atonement, belong rather to the Epistles than to the apostolic preaching recorded in the Acts. Baptism is the sign of remission of sins as well as of entrance into the Church; and personal holiness is a

necessary mark of the true believer. But the preaching does not dwell much on moral questions as such, and in detail; because the moral transformation is taken for granted as necessarily involved in the acceptance of the Risen Christ. The central theme of the preaching is, throughout, the Resurrection. The Crucifixion, though of profound significance, is not the climax of the drama of man's salvation, but is represented as necessary for the fulfilment of Prophecy, and as the last and greatest effort of Evil in its losing battle with God. The leading thought, if it may be so expressed, is Salvation rather than Redemption. The Holy One and the Just, by the power and glory of His Resurrection Life, quickens those who believe on Him from the death of sin to the life of righteousness.

6. What has here been said of Sin applies also to the other great question of Death and Immortality. To the Apostles it was not a question at all. They were so vividly and serenely convinced, that they did not make it a subject of argument or of much direct statement. Death, like Sin, is regarded as simply cancelled by the Resurrection. The seal of Christ's Glory is also the assurance of immortality for the believer. That for them was self-evident and sufficing.

On both these last two points it is characteristic of the Earliest Preaching that its essential utterances do not deal much with the past and future:

they are too deeply concerned with a present which, to the enlightened understanding of faith, is identical with eternity. And in like manner the evidence which they offer in support of the claim they made on every man, though in one sense it is based on the Unseen and Eternal, is, in another sense, present in time and place, being their own spiritual experience, objectively the life which was being lived, then and there, by Paul or Peter.

The content of the Earliest Preaching can thus best be defined as a belief in the Resurrection of Christ, viewed less as an historical event than as an Eternal Spiritual fact; implying a relation to God which is best, though imperfectly at best, expressed by the words Son and Sonship; and involving a belief in the forgiveness of sins through Him, and in the immortality of the Soul.

The brief Gospel of John the Baptist, 'Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand,' is repeated throughout the Earliest Preaching; but it finds a fuller meaning and a new claim and power expressed in that shortest and most effective of missionary sermons—of Paul to the jailer at Philippi—'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thine house.'

PUNISHMENT[1]

'And (Jesus) said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever.'—MATT. xxi. 19.

IT seems a hard saying, and yet it is recorded here as spoken by the lips of the most merciful and loving Saviour; of Him who would not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. Our Lord, you will remember, was coming from Bethany to Jerusalem, with His disciples, not long before His Passion; and when He saw a fig tree in the way He came unto it and found nothing thereon but leaves only, and said unto it, 'Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever;' and presently the fig tree withered away. A stern sentence surely, and executed with dreadful swiftness, and for that very reason, worthy of our notice; since it concerns us very deeply to remember, that although the Lord our God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness, He who is very Holiness cannot bear with wilful and unrepented sin, He who is the Truth itself may not endure hypocrisy, and the pretence of righteousness in those that have it not.

We believe that in the nature of God there

[1] Sherborne School Chapel, 1898.

exist together the two attributes of perfect Justice and perfect Mercy. How this can be we do not fully understand as yet, but we know that it is so; and as we value our eternal welfare we must act on our knowledge. We must not forget, nor wilfully thrust into the background either side of the Truth; if we would please God we must bravely try to—

> 'See Him no other than as He is,
> Give both infinitudes their due,
> Infinite Mercy, but, I wis,
> As infinite a Justice too.'

Not so very long ago it was the custom of preachers of God's word to dwell almost exclusively upon His Wrath and Justice; to hold up the pains of hell, as if they were the sole motive of righteousness and religion; and, as has been said, 'to crisp and scorch young souls with 'the burning white cautery of Gehenna.' It was a bad business; too often insincere in itself, and never appealing to the noblest natures, but rather driving them into revolt, and everywhere producing a plentiful crop of hypocrisy and unhappiness. Nowadays we have changed all that. Our tendency is rather to fall into the other extreme. We have dwelt so much upon the Love of God, and on His readiness to forgive sin, that we have forgotten that it is the *fear* of the Lord that is the beginning of wisdom. We fancy sometimes, I think, that because God is merciful and long-

suffering, He is indulgent, as a foolish parent is indulgent and indifferent to the wickedness of his children. I entreat you never to think of God as indulgent; never think of sin, or the forgiveness of sin, as a light and trivial matter. We are all sinners, all in desperate need of God's forgiveness; and if we do not rightly understand what it is, if we are accepting a sham for the real thing, there will come to us one day a frightful awakening.

Let us consider carefully, while we have time, what the real forgiveness of sins is, and what are its conditions. There are two great facts about sin and forgiveness that I should wish you to lay to heart; I ask you to think about what I am going to say, and try to understand it; for these two facts have a real bearing on our lives and actions; try to remember them the next time you are tempted to sin, or to stand by and see others sin, without a protest.

The first is this:—'In this world there is no 'forgiveness of sins.' I do not mean in this life, for we believe that repentance and confession of our sins to God will bring forgiveness, but in the natural order of things as we know it upon earth. Nature is unflinchingly, cruelly just. Those who keep her laws shall prosper, those who break them must suffer. We all recognise this to some extent in outward things, and shape our course accordingly. We know that the fire will burn

us, that the deep waters will drown us, and we call him a madman who acts as if it were not so, and suffers for his neglect. But the laws of our moral nature are not less stern. We may dream, if we will, that we can play for a while with the burning fire of lust or anger, and come away unscathed, but it is not so; before we know it, our souls are seared and branded with scars that nothing earthly can ever efface. Let us never fancy that we can sin a sin and be done with it. By the act of our will we have brought evil into being; nothing can change that now; and it will live on and work as part of our own character, and, alas, in its influence on others. It is a heart-shaking thought which may come to any of us, that some old sin of ours, long ago repented, or perhaps forgotten, may still be doing its deadly work in the lives of our old companions, spreading in its effects as a plague spreads from a single centre of infection. When you are tempted to sin, think what you are doing not to yourself only, nor your neighbours, but to others, whom maybe you will never know. The Lord your God is a jealous God, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.

In this world there is no forgiveness of sins. Yet we believe that God will pardon us and heal us, if we turn to Him rightly; it was for this that Jesus Christ died upon the Cross; that we might be cleansed and restored, and live with Him for

ever. But it is a great mystery. How can the soul that has once sinned, and dragged down others by its wickedness, ever be fit for the presence of the Holy One and the Just? How can it be so separated from its own past as to recover innocency and happiness? With man it is impossible, but with God all things are possible. Only we must not think of sin as a light thing, or of forgiveness as a matter of course.

And second:—There is no forgiveness at all without repentance. You may leave off committing a particular sin; you may be filled with an honest desire to lead a better life, but that is not repentance; you cannot simply close the chapter, and be quit of the past; the ugly record stands against you, and will stand, unless you make your peace with God. Then there is the sorrow, often a very genuine and poignant sorrow, which we feel when we are found out. Shame at the disgrace we have brought upon ourselves, regret that we have pained those who love us and lost their respect. These may help to bring us to the right way, but they are not enough. Real repentance means doing as well as feeling; and the first thing to do is to read carefully through that sad chapter of the past which we would so gladly close for ever, in order that we may truly know what we have been doing; and laying our sin before God in all its meanness, stripped of every excuse, implore His pardon. It may be,

of course, if we have been grievously sinning against others, that our conscience will bid us make open confession and reparation; but in every case there must be absolute plainness with ourselves, absolute submission to God. You see it is not a pleasant nor an easy thing to repent; think of this too when you are going to sin. But if you will carefully read through the Confession in the Communion Service, you will see that I have not exaggerated at all. We all need to pray very earnestly for grace so to use that Confession that we may truly receive in our hearts the solemn Absolution which follows it.

Let us turn now to consider the especial sin and its punishment which are denounced in our text; the sin of spiritual barrenness, what I may call ineffectualness, the failure to help our fellow-creatures, and its punishment, the loss of power to help. We need not look far, unhappily, either in our own experience, or in History for examples of both. Rarely in all their history, in ancient times or modern, have mankind produced a higher and nobler conception than the Monastic system was in its ideal, and for a time was in practice. In the dark ages of the life of Europe, when a strong hand and a false heart were the best passports to success in the world, these Houses were the homes, and the only secure homes, of purity and devotion and learning. The monks gave up, for the sake of God, ambition, pleasure, and comfort,

to spend their lives in prayer and works of charity. In all the Orders there was this broad principle in common. They were to live for others, not for themselves; they took vows of poverty, that they might not be entangled in the pursuit of money; they took vows of chastity that the cares of a family might not stand in the way of the work they had undertaken. Their days were spent in hard bodily labour, in study, or in visiting the sick; at night they were on the stone floors of their churches interceding with God for the souls of men.

The world saw, as it always will see, that these men were genuine servants of God, that they were doing a great work for Him and for their countrymen; and it rewarded them after its manner. It gave them wealth, and great estates, and dignity and influence. And the societies, which had thriven under poverty and hardship, sank under the weight of prosperity into decrepitude and uselessness. No longer did they labour with their hands to win their daily bread; serfs toiled for them, while the monks passed their time in day-long idleness, the fruitful parent of vice; the burning devotion which had been the informing spirit of the House in its early days was changed to an empty formalism, content with the mechanical repetition of half-understood Offices. Learning had departed from them to the laity, who soon began

to pick up what the monks were too idle to use, or even to treasure. The tree had ceased to bear fruit. Leaves there were still in abundance: to the very end churches arose more and more splendid, some of which we may still see; and yet more glorious within, rich with brocades and gold and jewels, and all the luxury of worship, long ago scattered abroad by the servants of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. There was great dignity, great power, and wealth, even some appearance of religion, and with it all these great houses were doing—nothing. Already by Henry V.'s time men were weary of them, and they got a sharp warning, as you may read in Shakespeare's play, but the danger was turned aside for the time, and the Abbots and their Monks went their way as though their houses should endure for ever, and for a hundred and twenty years more they did endure. Then the blow fell, suddenly and finally. There is a great deal of bitter controversy about the rights and wrongs of the dissolution of the Monasteries in England. I am not concerned to defend Henry VIII. He appears to me as a selfish and passionate man, using vile instruments for his own ends; and I do not find it necessary to believe all that was reported of the wickedness of the Monasteries at that time. But this I do say, that the fact of the fall of the Monasteries bears its own justification. They had ceased to

do their work, they had left off bearing fruit, and the sentence went forth against them. 'Cut 'it down, why cumbereth it the ground?' They are gone, and one thing at least is gone with them that we can well spare; the idea that a 'cloistered virtue' is specially and in a higher sense pleasing to God, so that 'Religious' meant in England in those days, and as it still means in Roman Catholic countries, only people who were bound by some monastic Rule.

One good thing the Reformation has taught us is, that not clergy or monks only, but all laymen and laywomen can be, and ought to be fully members of the Church of Christ; and in that sense we who are here to-day are the 'Religious,' we have inherited the responsibility of the Monastic Orders, to stand for Christ in the world. Have we inherited their spirit? And which spirit? The early or the late? The spirit of self-sacrifice and industry and devotion, or the spirit of sloth and sensuality and ostentation? Or are we to see that the cycle has come round again, that once more the great days of effort and achievement have been, and have departed; and that now once more the prosperous sons of the Church are a degenerate and feeble folk, content to live happy, useless lives in beautiful surroundings, caring only for pleasure, and comfort, and worldly successes? God forbid. I do not think it is so. Only let us

make up our minds that it shall not be so in our day. It is for you, by God's help, to decide; for whatsoever spirit rules in the hearts of you individual Churchmen and Churchwomen, that is the spirit of the Church of England. Day by day, and hour by hour, the choice of good and evil is offered to you, and every time you choose the better part you are bearing fruit acceptable to God; every time you yield, and choose the worse, you are losing power; and remember this, that if you go on refusing God's service, and doing what seems easiest, a time will come when it will be too late, when the will is utterly paralysed, and repentance is only despair. May God in His mercy save you and me from that. For to such an one the judgment is come in his lifetime; on him already the terrible doom is pronounced, 'Let no fruit grow on thee 'henceforward for ever.' And as yet such a fate seems far from any of us. If we are sinners we look forward to a time for repentance, if we are triflers we mean to take life more seriously some day. And yet is it not in the experience of all of you, that already your own shortcomings have prevented you from boldly rebuking vice, or stretching out a hand of help, when you would gladly have done it, if you had dared?

I suppose there are none who feel this more keenly than the clergy; too often when there is need to counsel, to rebuke, or to encourage, the

words are checked on our lips by the memory of our own weakness and failure. It is a bitter lesson for us all, but it may be a profitable one too, if we will turn for help where we are bidden to turn; and it should teach us, not to be discouraged, but to be very careful for the future. I know it is very hard to make up leeway, when we have let ourselves drift, even for a little while. With some of you, it may be, the discredit of past faults and follies robs you, for the time, of all influence for good, and even your efforts to regain the right way are met with suspicion or ridicule; that is part of your punishment; if you are really trying, God will not despise you; there is much joy in heaven over one sinner that repents. But with most of us the heart alone knoweth its own bitterness; we look back over our past efforts at better things and our past relapses; and we see little to make us hope for the future; and, indeed, if we stood alone, we might well despair as we learn to know ourselves. But we are bound to struggle on, and that not in our own strength. Let us learn of Jesus Christ how the poor wasted lives, which we manage so ill for ourselves, may become rich and useful—these are His words: 'I am the 'Vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth 'in Me and I in him, the same bringeth forth 'much fruit, for without Me ye can do nothing.'[1]

[1] John xv. 1–5.

REWARD[1]

'Behold thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord.'
—PSALM cxxviii. 5.

THE pious Israelite in the days before the Captivity, and even long after the Return, was little troubled by doubts and questionings as to the nature of the reward he might expect in return for zealous worship of Jehovah. If man performed his part of the covenant, doing his duty to God in punctual observance of the ceremonies of the Law, and his duty to his neighbour in Justice, Honesty, and Kindness, God would perform His part, by granting in bounteous measure to His servant the good things of this life taken from the unfaithful and rebellious. Such as are blessed of God shall possess the land, and they that are cursed of Him shall be rooted out. The ideal which is set before us in the Old Testament is no doubt a limited and material ideal: but it is not ignoble, for virtue and piety are not only the price, but an inseparable part of the destined well-being of the faithful, and the blessings promised are such as accompany only a wise and good use of prosperity and power.

[1] St. Mary's, Oxford, June 1906.

The inevitable and direct connection between godliness and material prosperity was most vividly presented to the Jews in the records of the great days of the making of their nation, the days when Jehovah still spoke plainly and openly to His people by the mouth of His chosen servants. The Divine Covenant is the basis of the national religion, but there is nothing mean or calculating in the inspired words which sanctify the riches of the cornfield, the vineyard, and the mine, by making their possession the Symbol of His approval who is at once the God of Justice and the Creator of the World.

'Thou shalt keep the commandments of the 'Lord thy God to walk in His ways, and to fear 'Him: for the Lord thy God bringeth thee unto 'a good land, a land of brooks of water, of foun-'tains and depths that spring out of valleys and 'hills: a land of wheat and barley: and vines, 'and fig-trees, and pomegranates: a land of oil 'olive, and honey: a land wherein thou shalt 'eat bread without scarceness: thou shalt not 'lack anything in it: a land whose stones are 'iron and out of whose hills thou mayest dig 'brass.' [1]

The best of all that Nature could give was the natural inheritance of the chosen of Jehovah, so long as they remained faithful to Him. But, as I have said, the ideal is not limited to mere

[1] Deut. viii. 6–9.

gross plenty of corn, and wine, and oil, to personal security and commercial success; it included, too, higher elements of happiness—a vigorous, occupied life, spreading its wholesome influence over all that touched it: a soul self-governed, not self-indulgent: love of wife and children: strong patriotism. 'Thou shalt eat 'the labours of thy hands: O well is thee, and 'happy shalt thou be. Thy wife shall be as the 'fruitful vine upon the walls of thine house; thy 'children as the olive branches round about thy 'table. The Lord from out of Sion shall so bless 'thee that thou shalt see Jerusalem in prosperity 'all thy life long. Yea, thou shalt see thy 'children's children and peace upon Israel.'[1]

Thou shalt see thy children's children—that too is a necessary part of the perfect life. The righteous man must live long as well as prosperously if he is to have his due reward. Thou shalt see thy children's children—and then an end: for here is the shadow on the bright picture, a shadow whose chill we feel ever and again through the Book of Psalms.

It is an interesting and curious problem to explain the absence or dimness of the belief in a future life among the Jews for so many centuries, especially when we consider the great place which the doctrines of the Immortality of the Soul and of Reward and Punishment after death

[1] Psalm cxxviii. 2–7.

held in the religion of Egypt. I have read an ingenious suggestion that the belief in a future life, with its prospect of a readjustment of the inequalities of the present, had been so twisted by the Egyptian priests to support a system of oppression and injustice, and to enforce their own claims to payment for what we may call Indulgences : that, in the Wisdom of God, a doctrine so corrupted by abuse was for the time withdrawn from any prominence in the religious consciousness of Israel now delivered from the house of bondage ; and they were therefore taught to look for reward and punishment in the present life—but of the fact, I think a candid reader can have no doubt. There are many Psalms whose writer must have believed that the time both of activity and happiness ended with the death of the body. The dead could not effectively serve Jehovah, nor expect the rewards given to those who did live and serve Him. They are conscious indeed, but conscious only of their own feebleness and misery. When we read such verses as 'Dost 'Thou shew wonders among the dead ? or shall 'the dead rise up again and praise Thee ? Shall 'Thy loving kindness be shewed in the grave, or 'Thy faithfulness in destruction ? Shall Thy won-'ders be known in the dark : and Thy righteous-'ness in the land where all things are forgotten ?' or 'The dead praise not Thee, O Lord : neither 'they that go down into silence,' and most pathetic

and significant of all in the 39th Psalm: 'O spare 'me a little, that I may recover my strength 'before I go hence and be no more seen,'[1] we feel we are not breathing the air of the sure and certain hope of the Resurrection to eternal life. We hear rather an echo from Homer of the exceeding bitter cry of Achilles in the Shades, longing only for life again, life on the hardest and basest conditions, but at least vigorous, self-directed action, instead of ineffectual, purposeless flitting: longing and refusing to be comforted.

μὴ δή μοι θάνατόν γε παραύδα, φαίδιμ' Ὀδυσσεῦ.
βουλοίμην κ' ἐπάρουρος ἐὼν θητεύεμεν ἄλλῳ
ἀνδρὶ παρ' ἀκλήρῳ ᾧ μὴ βίοτος πολὺς εἴη,
ἢ πᾶσιν νεκύεσσι καταφθίμενοισιν ἀνάσσειν.[2]

'Nay, Odysseus, speak not to me of comfort in death.
'Fainer would I be a thrall in the house of a landless man
'of little substance, than be king among the dead.'

Yet that, a long life, a prosperous life, was all that they looked for. In the earlier stages of Jewish thought the Messianic hope, the glorious future was for the Nation, not for the individual.

We may count it a strange conception, happiness cribbed, cabined and confined within the narrow compass of threescore years and ten, to satisfy the aspirations of God's chosen people.

[1] Psalms lxxxviii. 10; cxi. 17; xxxix. 15.
[2] *Od.* xi. 488, 491.

But when we remember what proportion of mankind have asked no more: what proportion of those who profess and call themselves Christians would be satisfied with so much, we may pause—and consider.

Such as it was, the ideal, and the belief in it might well maintain itself for a while in a small and exclusive community: especially as a lively belief in the truth of such a law tends very strongly to bring about its own fulfilment. A society which holds it an article of faith that the wicked do not prosper, is apt to see that those who fail to reach its standards shall not prosper. We may imagine that a tradesman of suspected morals or orthodoxy would not have had a very profitable business in Geneva about the year 1550. Moreover it is a quality of popular beliefs, even those which we cannot call religious, to retain their hold on the human mind in the face of striking and numerous contradictions of experience. Undeniable exceptions were met by the plea that the prosperity of the wicked was but for the moment and destined to make his fall more terrible. 'I have seen the ungodly in great 'prosperity, and flourishing like a green bay tree. 'I went by and lo he was gone. I sought him, 'but his place could nowhere be found.'[1]

And when popular beliefs have the sanction of religion, duty and the *vis inertiæ* combine to keep

[1] Ps. xxxvii. 35.

them inviolate. Sceptics, it is true, were not wanting. The *quod nunc abest* of Ennius must have found its way into thoughtful minds. The author of the Book of Job attacked the doctrine as untrue, the author of Ecclesiastes as unsatisfying. But it was the sharp lessons of fact which at last undermined its dominion over the thought of men. The religious Jew living under the insane tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes; the kindred but undevout dynasty of the Hasmoneans; the half alien, and wholly unpatriotic rule of the Herods, could no longer hold to this belief. The good things of this life were too obviously not with Jehovah's worshippers. And, side by side with the waning of earthly hopes, came a deepening of religious consciousness. Accordingly, in the literature of the time we trace the growth of an individual hope for the future. The pious Israelite, feeling his fate to be in the Hand of God, and sure that God would not forsake him, begins to expect that he, and all the godly, will have a share in the future of the Nation. The judgment to come is now no longer only the purification of Israel or the condemnation of Israel's foes, but the final settlement of the lot of all men dooming them to eternal blessedness or misery. The looked-for Messianic Kingdom itself grows ever more universal and sublime, till at last it is the very Kingdom of God.

I shall not pause to consider how far the

diligent labour of the scribes succeeded in re-materialising the ideas which the true religious instinct of the people, refined by suffering, had spiritualised: nor to dwell on the details, often tedious and puerile, of the Jewish Apocalypses. They concern us only so far as they have coloured the Christian Eschatology. The true and spiritual aspect of the Hope concern us more deeply, as being the preparation of the human mind for the teaching of Christ. Whatever may be our opinion as to the limitations of our Lord's human knowledge, we are bound, I think, to admit that in this, as in other matters, He adopted the contemporary standards of knowledge and opinion: the message is eternal and absolute, but it is expressed in terms of his hearers' understanding and sympathy. I hope therefore I shall not be misunderstood if I say that we are not to regard the Parable of Dives and Lazarus, and the last seventeen verses of the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, as a direct revelation in detail concerning the Last Judgment or the state after death. The substance of the lesson is new and startling, and universally cogent for every age and every individual: but the form in each case can be paralleled from writings which no one believes to be inspired.

In another remarkable passage those who have given up for Christ's sake are promised 'an hun-'dred-fold now in this time, houses and brethren

'and sisters, and mothers and children and lands, 'with persecutions : and in the world to come Eter-'nal life.'[1] The words have been explained by giving them a figurative sense : but they suggest on the surface a concession to the belief in the material prosperity of the righteous, still not wholly lost in the expectation of higher blessedness to come. And we may note that this idea seems to have passed from the minds of the Christians of the Apostolic age. They soon learned to accept suffering as a mark of their calling ; they must suffer with Christ that they might also be glorified together. Yet, if the present was dark, if the recompense lay all in the future, still they were sure of their reward, and sure too of the main outlines of the coming events which were to bring them to their reward : whether they were content with the sober confidence of St. Paul, 'I reckon that the sufferings 'of this present time are not worthy to be com-'pared with the glory which shall be revealed in 'us.'[2] or warmed and coloured their hopes with all the gorgeous imagery of the Revelation.

The belief in an early return of the Lord carried the Church through the first century of her existence ; and even before men had time to say 'the Lord delayeth his coming,' the visions of enthusiastic faith had set into Dogma. The Christian *knew* that Christ would come to Judg-

[1] Mark x. 30. [2] Rom. viii. 18.

ment at last (though he himself should pass to his rest long ere the Coming), and that then they who have done good shall go into life everlasting, and they that have done evil into everlasting fire. That was, and is officially, the Catholic faith which except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved. There were no doubts about the reward of the elect: no scruples about the fate of the reprobate. On the contrary, it is late in the history of the Church before we cease to meet with the horrible fancy, naïvely set down, that the felicity of the blessed will gain an added savour from the sight of the torments of the lost. A fancy which we may explain and excuse by calling it a legacy from days of bitter persecution, but with which, thank God, we cannot sympathise; let us say in all humility, we have not so learned Christ.

There is perhaps no minor article of the Church's faith which has been so universally accepted, so popular as this, the certainty of a reward, the nature of which is in essentials revealed to us. The conceptions of it may vary from age to age and from mind to mind: from the ineffable joys of the beatific vision, to something hardly less material, though less gross, than the Mahometan paradise: from severe and restrained statement, to the riot of legendary fancy which has imagined a whole folk-lore of the other world. But the certainty stands, and the main

outlines stand. Even the Reformation could not touch them. Let us pass at once from Jerusalem, from Patmos, from the Middle Ages, to Puritan England at the end of the seventeenth century.

'The men then asked, what must we do in the 'Holy Place? To whom it was answered, you 'must there receive the comfort of all your toil, 'and have joy for all your sorrow: you must 'reap what you have sown, even the fruit of all 'your Prayers and Tears, and sufferings for the 'king by the way. In that place you must wear 'crowns of gold, and enjoy the perpetual sight 'and vision of the Holy One, for there you shall 'see Him as He is. There also you shall serve 'Him continually with praise, with shouting and 'thanksgiving whom you desired to serve in the 'world, though with much difficulty because of the 'infirmity of your flesh. There your eyes shall 'be delighted with seeing, and your ears with 'hearing the pleasant voice of the Mighty One. 'There you shall enjoy your friends again that 'are got there before you; and there you shall 'with joy receive even every one that follows into 'the Holy Place after you. There also you shall 'be cloathed with glory and majesty, and put into 'an equipage fit to ride out with the King of 'Glory. When He shall come with sound of 'Trumpet in the Clouds, as upon the wings of 'the wind, you shall come with Him: and when 'He shall sit upon the Throne of Judgment, you

'shall sit by Him: yea and when He shall pass 'sentence upon all the workers of Iniquity, let 'them be Angels or Men, you also shall have a 'voice in that judgment because they were His 'and your enemies. Also when He shall again 'return to the City, you shall go too, with sound 'of Trumpet, and be ever with Him.'

It is a beautiful and heart-lifting vision: to John Bunyan more real than the solid walls of Bedford gaol: to us, alas, how unsubstantial. It is not so much that we reject what our forefathers believed about the Reward, as that their beliefs have crumbled from us unawares: not the legendary trappings only, but the sharp outlines that were common to them all. I am speaking to Christians: we believe with all our hearts that the soul is immortal, that God is, and is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him: yet the forms under which other generations pictured the consummation of His justice and His mercy, and were satisfied, can satisfy us no longer. We cry with troubled human hearts, 'Lo we have 'left all and followed thee: what shall we have 'therefore?' and it seems to us in our dark hour as if there was no voice neither any that answered.

We can no longer dream that old dream, that virtue and piety bring material prosperity. God has told us that He maketh His sun to shine upon the evil and the good; and sendeth His

rain upon the just and the unjust. He has taught us by experience that it is those who obey nature's laws who win nature's treasures: those who obey economic laws who grow rich. Doubtless the criminal is punished by Society, the profligate suffers in health and fortune: but we can see only too clearly that an enlightened and calculating selfishness is the spirit of this world, and the likeliest inheritor of worldly success and influence. The great blind forces do not turn aside from their path to slay the sinner or spare the righteous. We see good men suffering pain, and poverty, and neglect all their lives long: and the ungodly flourishing without repulse, just so long as they observe the conditions of success, which are very different from the moral law.

But it is idle to multiply words over what is a commonplace, a truism to-day. Surely we must turn with the early Christians from a world where sin and sorrow rule, to a better world where wrong is righted, and the Saints of God triumph at last and for ever. We turn: but the glorious vision that met their eyes has faded: and we see, only and always, the grey mist that hides the sunny hills, a veil impenetrable to sight and sound. While we are young and chiefly interested in the opening world, it does not matter so much. But as we grow older, and one dear friend after another passes beyond the cloud, and year by year the number of our beloved dead grows swiftly:

yes, and as the thought becomes more present with us, that one day we too must arise and depart: we long piteously for knowledge of that undiscovered country whither they are gone, and we soon must go.

'There you shall enjoy your friends again that 'are got thither before you.'

So said the angel to the pilgrims: surely it must be true: yet if we could have a sign to make us sure, how easy it would be to live out the weary years. But we strive in vain to pierce the darkness. There is no voice neither any that answers.

It has pleased God to tell us nothing. It has pleased Him to take from us the simple beliefs with which more childish generations bridged the gulf between the living and the dead. Perhaps it is to teach us that there is no gulf; that then and now, there and here, are modes of human thought which have no meaning for the Everlasting: that the Kingdom of God is within us, and the knowledge of the true God is eternal life.

But so it has pleased Him: as the Angel of Jehovah turned our first parents back from the Paradise they had lost: so His Will turns us back from the Paradise we hope to win, till it be time. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

He has hidden the future from us: and there-

fore men who believe in Him will not give themselves to repining and idle speculation, but loyally accept the conditions He has laid upon them. He has set us here, pent in the narrow circle of our days: here is our work: here, too, some measure of reward, if the labourer be worthy of his hire. What shall we have therefore? Surely if not outward prosperity as we have seen, then Happiness—why no, we must not claim happiness as our due. Man being soul and body inextricably knit, and affecting each the other every moment, happiness must always be largely a matter of outward circumstance which we cannot control; still more largely a matter of temperament: and a man may be trying to serve God very faithfully, and yet not be happy in any natural sense of the word. Moreover, an imperfect being with the standard of God's Holiness, and the belief in God's Love before him, must often be very unhappy. But if happiness be not the Christian's wage, there is a deeper, soberer feeling which we call peace of mind? Yes, for those whose faith is large and steady; but for us, whose fiery trial it is that we have faith, but not faith enough, what peace, so long as the huge mystery of sin and pain surges across our sky, and threatens every moment to blot out the Face of God.

That difficulty has always confronted the believer: but to-day it is not the only source, nor

for many the most prominent source of uneasiness. We know that the old beliefs, and the records on which they are based, are subjected to a new and severe scrutiny by all the modern methods of learning and inquiry. And it is not the learned only who are concerned, as they are with the literature and archæology of secular history. The unrest is widespread, and perhaps most deeply felt where the questions at issue are least understood. Faith teaches us, and experience teaches us that the fire of Truth will only purge away the dross of man's imaginings, and leave the pure gold of God's Word untarnished and unconsumed. Yet there are few of us who may not have to give up something that we have held sacred and indubitable: something that we have rightly prized for the associations that clustered round it. Even if we can make the sacrifice joyfully for truth's sake, what peace can there be for the clergy, or for any instructed Christians, who feel their responsibility for the perplexed souls of the ignorant and the young, and think what a careless word, an ill-weighed judgment, may do to them in these perilous times?

Behold we have left all and followed thee, what shall we have therefore? Not wealth and ease, not a sure knowledge of the life to come, not the right to happiness, and peace of mind. What then? Is He not faithful that promised? Doubtless He is faithful.

There is implanted in the heart of man a clear unreasoning certainty—unreasoning because it is earlier than reason and of higher authority—that it is better somehow to do right than wrong, irrespective of pains or pleasures resulting. Plainly it is not always operative, and it can too easily be quenched in the soul by evil habit. But it is this that saved pre-Christian societies, this that in great measure saves society to-day from anarchy and dissolution: the instinctive belief that the reward of goodness lies there, in the right act itself, and in the character which makes the right act natural. Such a motive is so far removed from the brute instincts of self-preservation and appetite on the one hand, and from the calculating prudence of a rationalistic ethic on the other, that we are justified in looking for its origin elsewhere. It is not a Christian Philosophy alone which will explain this instinctive choice, and the pleasure which accompanies its right exercise, as the response of the soul to a divine stimulus within it.

And for the believer the universal law is expressed in terms of a higher and more intimate knowledge of the Divine. For him the motive and the reward of life are found alike in the clear and passionate consciousness of the abiding presence of God. I have said that much of the teaching of Jesus took the form most fitting for the time and for the hearers. But not all: there

are many places, especially in St. John's Gospel, of which we may reverently say, 'Now speakest 'Thou plainly, and speakest no proverb,' and our Blessed Lord has told us once for all the reward of the faithful disciple, when He says—'If a man 'love Me, he will keep My commandments, and 'My Father will love him, and We will come unto 'him, and make Our abode with him.'[1]

Do we despise the Reward, as unreal, unsatisfying? It holds all, and more than all that prophets and saints have pictured. It is more than the Hope of Immortality: it is the assurance here and now of Eternal Life. It proclaims anew, and transfigures the ancient truth that Well-doing is Well-being. God will not always give us our heart's desire—for He is wiser than we—but even on earth He does cause those who believe in Him to prosper in serving Him. Only in the fear of God lies success in the work that is worth doing—the moulding of character, the building of a Christian society.

Behold, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord.

[1] John xiv. 23.

FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE[1]

'We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren.'—1 JOHN iii. 14.

'He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.'—JOHN v. 24.

I WAS pleading in the last chapter for clear and honest thought about a subject on which we desire so much, and know so little, that sentiment and imagination have more than their common power over our minds—the question of what lies beyond this life. It is surely well for us to recognise the limitations of our knowledge, with their lesson of a loyal acceptance of the conditions in which God has placed us here to do our duty to Him and to our fellow mortals: a kind of Christian Stoicism which is a brave and wholesome discipline in the practical uses of life. But it would not be well if we came to regard those limitations as all there is, or as final. There is something more than that, something at which I was only able to glance when I said, 'Perhaps it is to teach us that there 'is no gulf; that *then* and *now*, *there* and *here*

[1] All Saints, Knightsbridge, January 24, 1909.

'are modes of human thought which have no 'meaning for the Everlasting: that the Kingdom 'of God is within us, and the knowledge of the 'true God is eternal life.' The barriers of Time and Space which shut us in are real and impenetrable for human sense and human reason; but they are the creatures as well as the tyrants of our mortal nature; fleeting and unsubstantial as the grey mists to which I have compared them. Even while we are in the body, there are moments when we transcend its limitations, in proportion as our life is concentrated in that immortal part of us which has communion and kinship with the Divine: Pisgah sights, not of a Promised Land which we shall never reach, but of one which lies all about us, barely hidden by the low hills that close the horizon as we trudge along through the desert. It is well to recognise our limitations, but it is perverse and cowardly to see in them the limits of God's Universe too; to cry that rock and sand are reality, and the wide fruitful land that the mountain top showed us is a Mirage. It is foolish, because we cannot have the knowledge that we crave, to reject the comfort and assurance which are sent us not as we will, but as God wills. The revelation which we desire cannot come to us in terms of human thought and speech; yet it may come, and does come, with its full blessing of strength and happiness. 'I would not have 'you ignorant, brethren, concerning them which

'are asleep: that ye sorrow not even as men 'which are without hope.'

How can the knowledge come which is the foundation of that Hope for those we love and for ourselves? Not by any method which vainly tries to drag back that which is spiritual into the narrow sphere of the material; not therefore by argument and subtle reasoning upon probabilities, the so-called proofs of the immortality of the Soul. God has hidden the mystery from the wise and prudent, and revealed it, if it be revealed at all, to the instinctive apprehension of the child spirit. Nor again will that knowledge come to us through the materialism run mystical of our latter-day necromancy, which is really founded on the old pagan belief that the Soul *loses* something in vitality and power by its release from the body, and flits ineffectual through space till the appropriate witchcraft entangles it once more in the trammels of matter. Let those who find pleasure in it imagine that they can recall the spirits of the happy dead from their place of rest to satisfy their curiosity; and watch them struggling, through the crude mechanism with which an incredible condescension provides them, to convey incoherent commonplaces upon trivial subjects. *They* have nothing to tell us. If all the alleged phenomena which they obtain were true and provable beyond question, what could be more appalling than a revelation which shows the departed souls of

wise and good men as impotent, and tormented with a vain desire to utter the thought that is in them: and so degrades them below the level of average mortals, and evens them with the idiot and the savage? But for the Christian these puerilities carry their own disproof. We do not know much, but we know better than that. The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them; nor yet the foolish persecution of the medium and the planchette.

Not so does the Message come which lightens our darkness and stills our doubt. Earth and sense have nothing to teach about the true meaning of that life which is escaped from them.

How then shall the knowledge come? The two verses from St. John which stand at the head of this chapter show it as coming from God to the spirit of man through the spiritual powers Faith and Love. And these are not two things, but one. God is Love, and Faith in Him is essentially the vivid consciousness of His Love for us, which kindles in us an answering love for Him, and for our fellow-men. The assurance of immortality is, not so much deducible from, as implicit in, the belief in God's Love and Power. The supreme expression of that belief is the assertion of man's immortality: God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son to the end that all that believe in Him

should not perish, but have eternal life. That Gift, the Incarnation of Our Blessed Lord, the perfect manifestation of the divine love, brings to the believer the right to love God, and to love the brethren; which again are not two things but one, for all who believe are one with Him, and one in Him. For patient searchers on this quest the Incarnation has its twofold lesson, two sides of the one Truth, the lesson of the Unity of all Life, and the lesson of the continuity of each life. All Life is one, and the Incarnation teaches us that the One Life is God's and ours, or to speak more truly, that it is God and we; and therefore, though it appears to us as bounded by Time and Space, yet in very truth they have no power upon it. It cannot be holden of them.

We say that hours and years of our life are *past*; and for us the words are poignantly true; for some of us the thought is even more full of sorrow and disquiet than the shadowy future at which we peer forward with dim and fearful eyes. But with Him who is our life there is no Past, no Future: and for us, too, they are but names of the darkness that lies about our path till the Day break and the shadows flee away. If all Life is one, all is safe. Our life is hid with Christ in God, where no change nor chance can reach it. 'Of those whom thou gavest me have I lost 'none.' In what we call our past, all that was true and vital, whether it was love, or happiness,

or wisdom, or beauty, *is*: no moment that we have really lived but is eternal. It is the negative things, acts and thoughts unloving, unhappy, unwise, unbeautiful, that pass and vanish like phantoms of the night, if we keep our sure hold on the Life which is Our Saviour and our true selves. Only if we are fearful and unbelieving; if we believe in these ugly phantoms, and cherish them and serve them, we can endow them with a kind of reality and life, and give them power over our souls, power to weaken, and it may be to kill the true life that is in us. Phantoms they are, children of the night, no more real than we make them; yet for most of us frightfully real and alive with the vitality that our unfaith has given them. Yet we know that the Light which is the life of men can break the spell, and scatter the haunting shadows of sin into the nothingness wherefrom our unbelief and selfishness has called them forth. It is a high venture of faith; but if we are Christians we are bound to make it: we must not let ourselves believe that Evil has any existence except as the negation of God, or any power of itself upon the soul of the believer.

The other side of the Truth about Life and Death which is fully revealed in the Incarnation is the Unity, that is, the continuity of the individual life. If your life and mine be one with the Eternal, it cannot cease to be. Such a phrase has no meaning nor relevancy. And so Our

Lord speaks of Eternal Life not as something future and contingent, but as the immediate possession of the believer. 'He that heareth my 'words, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath 'everlasting life . . . and is passed from death 'unto life.' It is not permissible to take the words in a merely figurative sense, and to limit their meaning to moral and spiritual regeneration. That is an essential element in the idea: but it includes also what we mean by personal immortality, as is plainly shown in the sixth chapter of St. John.

Now if we accept Our Lord's teaching, and desire the comfort of it, we must clear our minds of a preconception which has an inveterate hold upon the mind of man, and appears to be terribly confirmed by the evidence of the senses. We must school ourselves to regard death as what it really is—not an end, not even a break in the unity of life, but a step forward and upward, a step out of captivity into freedom, out of twilight into sunshine, to fuller knowledge and heightened power; and therefore a thing greatly to be desired when God accounts us ready for it. And if God grants us this courage and insight for ourselves, we must not grudge that good thing to our beloved who have passed away before us, though it be purchased with our bitter sorrow and bereavement. We must grieve indeed; I think God means us to grieve; but our grief will be pure from resent-

ment and despair. We are spared the cruellest pang of thinking of them as unhappy and robbed of all that life gave, all that life promised. 'In 'the sight of the unwise they seem to die: and 'their departure is taken for misery, and their 'going from us to be utter destruction: but they 'are in peace.' Peace, yes; but not lethargy or inaction; they are not dead; they live and grow in strength and wisdom, and in the likeness of that Divine Image wherein man was created at the first—in that clearer air bringing to more perfect fruition the gifts we know so well, and miss so sadly. So we are to think of them, and wait in patience for the hour when the Angel of Death shall lead us to them again, and give back to us for ever all the store of love and joy and beauty which the illusion of mortality tells us we have lost for ever. Now if there be consciousness and progress in that world, surely it sets at rest once for all the question, which troubles many an aching heart, whether it is wrong to remember the departed in our prayers, and hope that they are praying for us. And it sets at rest, too, those terrible doubts about the power and goodness of God which are suggested by the seeming waste of death. When a man or woman full of years and experience, rich in love and honour, passes away; when the question they could have answered must remain unspoken; when the counsel they could have given is sought in vain; it seems as

if all that treasure of knowledge and kindness, of wisdom and gracious influence, were scattered and lost for ever, whether it be to mankind, or just to one family and a little circle of friends.

Yet here with the loss is a certain sense of completeness; the allotted span has been lived out, the work well done. It is otherwise when a strong man is taken away in mid-career, with his work half done, great and beneficent designs frustrate, not to be realised now for want of the guidance of his mind, the impulse of his character. And stranger and sadder yet when some young life, full of beauty and promise, is cut down in the very hour of fulfilment, when the years of nurture and training are even now passing into years of accomplishment and service, and the lamp of the meaning of life burns clear and steady: then in that hour the promise is broken, and all its dowry—the health, the vigour, the cleverness, the sympathy, the charm—all lost and wasted, as a sudden wind tosses the petals of a red rose on the garden path. And we cannot but feel the cruel wanton irony of it, and cower shaken and resentful.

But in truth God is not cruel or wanton. The ripe wisdom of age, the half-fulfilled purposes of man's prime, the sweet promise of pure and generous youth, are not lost and wasted when the dear mortal body which held them for a little while holds them no more. God has them in His

keeping, and they are ours for ever because He has taken them to Himself.

I have said that the revelation we desire cannot come to us in terms of human thought and speech; yet that which God has revealed to us in His Son, He does vouchsafe to confirm in experience, not of sense but of spirit: knowledge how dearly bought, yet surely worth the cost. Even to speak of it is to tread on holy ground; for it is in the forlorn hour of bereavement, upon them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death that the light shines.

To have known the ineffable glory of death: to have seen the light of immortality shine in dying eyes, the life of the spirit glowing ever brighter and intenser as the bodily life wanes: to have been sure that the mortal body is not that which we know and love, but its now empty dwelling—this is to have looked beyond the veil, and read the mysteries of Life and Death: a knowledge granted to some among the sons of men which they cannot share with those who have not known it; which, alas, they cannot always keep clear and living for themselves. For the vision grows dim and fades to a memory. They must come down from the Mountain and mingle again reluctant in the common life of men with its sordid cares and petty interests. Then Grief, the dark-robed figure that sat waiting patiently, claims its own. It is the little things of life that

set the edge to sorrow, and make loss unbearable, even while we believe that the greater issues are in the hand of God. When we come back and find, with a shock of surprise, the visible and material, with their claims on our mortal nature, and their response to its needs, seemingly unchanged; then it is hard to believe that the things seen are temporal, the things which are not seen, eternal. Yet in very truth *this* the familiar, the commonplace, the obviously real to sight and touch, is the illusion: *that*, the mystical vision growing dim, as our souls, washed in the baptism of tears, get dusty and tarnished again in the traffic of the world's busy ways, that is real and eternal. The strange uplifting of a great sorrow, which keeps the mourner calm and happy through the first days, is not fancy or hysteria; it is the light that shines through the Open Door. Too soon the Door is shut again: it is not our time yet; and we must turn back alone from the threshold to duties that are a heavy burden, and pleasures that have lost their savour:—

> 'Yet it is better to have seen,
> And sometimes through the dark returns
> A glimmer of the vanished day.'

And the heart that once has learned that the departed are not dead shall attain through patience the knowledge that neither are they far away. They are with us in the abiding influence of their

love on thought and life, which we misname memory. And sometimes they are bidden to draw closer yet, in presence more real and vivid than sight or speech, the wordless communion of soul with soul, the free with the captive, that comes in quiet dawns, when the murmur of the world is stilled, and the veil of flesh grows thin, and transparent to the Eternal Light.

If we could walk ever in that light we should always know, and our sorrow would be turned into joy. But the world, and the flesh, and the illusions of sense are too strong for us. We look down, and shades of the prison-house begin to close about us again. Dank, earth-born mists rise and blot out the Vision, and we half forget what we have seen, and question if it was ever real and present. The dark river flows on, and we only know that our feet are still set upon the hither shore, and stand perplexed and afraid, half-shrinking half-longing

'tendentesque manus ripae ulterioris amore.'

PART II

PRACTICE

RELIGIO PUERI—I[1]

I MUST explain that the boy I speak of is the public school boy, whom I have studied with some pains and a great deal of pleasure, not the Board school variety, of which I am culpably ignorant. Perhaps I ought to apologise, in a democratic age, for applying the generic name to a class, and, what is even worse, to a Class: but I may plead in extenuation that the larger question has been rather fully dealt with of late, in the Press and elsewhere, by persons more competent than myself, and also by those who make up for their lack of information by the depth of their convictions: with the result of much darkening of counsel and loss of temper; so that a peaceable man may be excused, even applauded, if he refrains from publishing his views on religious instruction in elementary schools, with digressions on the kindred topics of Definite Church Teaching, our Protestant Heritage, Priestcraft, and Undenominationalism.

The subject of religion in the public schools is not in itself an unimportant one. If we believe, as many of us do believe in our hearts, that it is

[1] *Monthly Magazine*, January 1902.

the fear of God which makes and keeps a nation great ; and that the pressing questions of internal and external government which England has to answer, and answer right at her peril, can only be solved by Christian methods ; then it concerns us all very nearly to inquire how far the means we are using tend to produce a God-fearing generation. The age we live in is notoriously an age of material standards and low ideals. Everything is estimated with cynical frankness at its money value. The getting of wealth at all costs, and the spending of it on bodily comfort and pleasure, are recognised as the sufficient purpose and reward of life. Art and literature are not untainted. And the millionaire, instead of being regarded as a menace to civilised society, is exalted into a popular hero, and even oddly haloed as a kind of saint if he chooses to spend a fraction of his swollen treasure on pauperising his fellow-creatures. Of course, this is only one side of the truth, and that side rather feverishly put. If it were the whole truth we should have to give up our belief in God, and withdraw decently from a world where there was no room for followers of the Sermon on the Mount ; but we know that there are seven thousand in Israel who have not bowed the knee to Baal, and we are confident that this idolatry will pass as others have passed. Only, wherever this base material conception of life obtains, it is by its very nature more in evi-

dence than the other side, and gets a fatal hold on the weak and the undecided and the unprepared. The true end of education is to-day more than ever not to impart information useful or other, but to keep alive the spiritual side of the nature, to fan the spark of divinity which informs the clay. It is not superfluous or uninteresting to inquire how far those who will be, if not the rulers, at least the leaders of England a few years hence are being equipped to face this modern spirit of evil—

> 'Mammon, the least exalted spirit that fell
> From heaven.'

And if this is, as it seems to be, a question of national importance, there is still a class to whom it comes home more poignantly, as touching individual lives which are dearer to them than their own. All who have boys at public schools, all who have young sons who, in the course of time, will be naturally going to the father's old school, or for whom a school must be chosen—all these have a right to ask, they are all bound to ask, how far religion will be a factor in their boy's life among his new surroundings, how far the thought of God will be a check to him and a support in the dangers and troubles and temptations of school-life. And in the first place, let me tell them plainly, it rests chiefly with the parents themselves. It is their duty to train their own children in morals and religion from

the first ; and if they neglect it, nothing can make up the loss. This sounds like a commonplace : but it is habitually disregarded in practice. No doubt there are many parents who are ready to sacrifice their leisure and their amusements, and to give themselves, not their money only, to their children : but, as a rule, people see more of their children in the drawing-room, and less of them in the nursery, than they did formerly ; and the change is not for the better. The little boy is left to nurses, often rapidly changed, and nursery governesses, till, perhaps at eight years old, he is packed off to his private school, and his whole training, mental, moral, and physical, is henceforth the business of the schoolmaster. If he prospers, the parents' sense of duty to their offspring is covered by the terminal cheque ; but if he is stupid, if he is ill, if he is naughty, they put it down at once to some defect in the school, often quite forgetting that no discipline and care there can neutralise a demoralising atmosphere at home. A boy home for the holidays is a privileged being, subject to nothing like the discipline of the child who lives at home. He is generally much with his elders, and it is the fashion nowadays to talk very freely before children : and if he sees that they are selfish and ill-tempered and mean ; that they are careless of their religious duties (by which I mean far more than regular church-going) and of their duties to their dependants ; that they consider

being well off and having a good time as the really important thing; if he is encouraged to be pert and self-willed; it is not likely that any teaching he may get at school will convince him of the beauty of self-sacrifice and obedience. It may fairly be objected that it would be worse still for a boy to live all the year in a careless home: but my point is that parents, by handing over their children at an early age to professional teachers and guardians, lose all sense of responsibility, and treat them in the holidays with an indulgence, and what is really an indifference, which quickly undermine the character that school-training is intended to give: whereas, if the father and mother felt that their son was really in their charge, they would discipline themselves not to offend his innocence, or risk his loving reverence: and both sides would have at least a chance of gaining that mutual knowledge which is the power to help, instead of the superficial intercourse which often leaves those who are nearest in blood strangers all their lives. Certainly, where it is possible, a boy's own parents are his best spiritual pastors and masters: his mother till he is five or six, his father and mother till he is old enough to think for himself and fend for himself in the wider world of a public school, guarded by a reasonable love for those he leaves behind, and duly warned by his father of the special dangers that will beset his first years at school.

But it is true that for many boys, some would say for most boys, this is a counsel of perfection. It seems to postulate ideal parents, and an ideal home: though I believe almost any parents could do more for their own children than the wisest and kindest stranger: the tie of natural affection gives them such a tremendous advantage to start with if they will only keep it. Still it may be granted that, in the present conditions, a good private school is the easiest way out of it for the parent, and at least the second best for the boy. Private schools abound, and seem to provide all that the most exacting can require. Boys are well taught, well fed and cared for in all respects with a patient zeal and kindness which cannot be reckoned in the bills.

The modern private schoolmaster is a very encouraging type; unselfish and conscientious, often wise and sympathetic, he has a strong influence for good at a very impressionable time. The great fault of these good private schools is that they tend to claim too much of a boy's life, and try to keep their pupils when they would be doing better at a public school: a fault surely pardonable if not inevitable. But it cannot be too clearly understood that not all private schools are good. A little evil leaven easily leavens the whole foolish lump, and there are not the counterbalancing safeguards of a larger society to check the mischief. When the tone of a private school

is not thoroughly sound and wholesome it is apt to be unspeakable. It must have happened once or twice to most public schoolmasters of any standing to meet with a poor child who has come to his public school at fourteen, already thoroughly corrupt. It is an experience not easily forgotten: an experience which a man should not easily forget. But happily such melancholy instances are not common; though they are common enough, as most headmasters know, to be a source of constant anxiety, sometimes of serious trouble. Yet for most boys the time of test, the time when some resource of motive, some higher sanction is needed, comes at the public school. We who know something of school life from both sides; who have preserved in a measure the lively memory of our own days at school, which is a gift so necessary and yet, as it sometimes seems, so perishable; who as masters have watched many generations of boys come and pass and disappear, cannot but feel at times how great is the risk to which parents light-heartedly commit their sons.

We are honestly convinced that public school life is the best training for an English boy; that its little hardships, and far more serious temptations are part of the discipline needed to brace and strengthen his character, and to form a nice child into a wholesome sensible man. We know that the enormous power of boys who are for any

reason leaders is very seldom misused for cruel or selfish ends; that in fact the system works well as a whole. And yet, when the thing is brought very near home to us; when we see the son of a dear friend, or it may be our own son, launched for the first time alone in a great school, full of hope and courage, pleasure-loving and a little reckless as a young creature should be, apt to be greedy of praise and notice from his school heroes, boy or master, and yet anxious on the whole to do right, and to be a credit and comfort to his dear home, we cannot help trembling a little. We remember the failures; the sudden and irrevocable extinction of proud hopes, or sadder still, perhaps, and more common, the gradual renunciation of high purpose, the lapse into selfishness and contented futility. We have seen it so often: the common sanctions, self-respect, ambition, love of praise, love of parents, losing their hold one after another, and fine characters, full of charm and possibilities for good, slipping down, very likely without scandal or any notable catastrophe, into moral decrepitude. We have seen it so often; and yet, to rebuke our want of faith, though we see it not, and cheerfully accept its results as normal, still more often the opposite miracle is in progress. Every year, every term, hundreds of boys, not story-book saints and heroes, but common ordinary schoolboys, are passing safely through what we call the

usual temptations of school: of course the strain varies with temperament and circumstances; but whatever be the pressure, the boy has to meet it practically without help from outside; for from the nature of the case it is only by the rarest chance that the authorities, masters or sixth-form boys, know anything of the struggle till it is decided one way or the other; most often they never know of it. I have said deliberately that the happy issue is commoner than the other; for if it were not the public schools would be a chaos, or rather they would have perished long ago unlamented. No society can continue to exist unless the good outnumber and outweigh the wicked, if it were but by fifty-one to forty-nine in the hundred. But as a matter of fact the proportion is better than this, and schoolmasters may go on working, and parents sending their sons to school with a good heart.

But the question remains, what is the cause of the difference between these two classes—the boys who with many slips and stumbles are working steadily upwards, and the boys who are rushing or strolling downwards? Let us take a striking instance which is, happily, not uncommon: the case of a boy with all the apparent predisposition to compliance, strongly attracted by pleasure, fearing greatly the ill-will of his companions, either from a love of popularity, or because he is naturally timid and submissive, who

yet keeps straight when others give way before the very temptations which would seem to appeal most to his weakness. It is, as I say, a fairly common case in our experience, and unaccountable except on one hypothesis. One thing at least is clear; there is a determining factor which outweighs all ordinary motives of action. And this factor, I think, it is not unreasonable to call the Grace of God.

It is a common view, perhaps more widely held than expressed, that the average schoolboy is a kind of pleasing pagan; and that if he eats and sleeps and plays games and learns his lessons, he is doing all that can be reasonably expected of him. This theory carried out in action has led and will lead to very surprising results in the way of practical paganism; but it is a very natural result of a superficial acquaintance with the habits of boys, and of their impenetrable reticence on all serious subjects, of which I shall have to speak again. On the other hand there are conscientious persons, of whom I wish to speak with entire respect, who appear to think that boys should be, and may conveniently be made *religious* in the technical sense, minutely following out the details of a mediæval ritual, and submitting their souls to frequent inspection to see how they are prospering. It may be desirable: they may very well be right there, and I wrong; though it seems to me that there is danger both

to reverence and manliness. But practicable it is not, for there is in boys an inexhaustible store of conservatism and passive resistance; and, in fact, the schools which have been founded on these lines, show a tendency to revert to the normal type in proportion to their general success.

The great majority of the distinguished scholars and able men who are to-day at the head of our great public schools, are equally removed from either extreme. They are profoundly convinced of the necessity of religion as an element in the life of a boy and of a school, and understand no less clearly that this can best be attained without bringing young minds prematurely in contact with ecclesiastical disputes. They are fully alive to the pastoral side of a headmaster's duties, and they are loyally backed up by an increasing number of earnest assistant-masters in holy orders, and by the not less valuable help of truly Christian men who prefer for sufficient reasons to remain laymen. The results of the improved relation between masters and pupils, which has come about in the last fifty years, is nowhere more marked than in the school chapel and its worship. Compare the lot of the modern schoolboy with his grandfather's in this matter. Then, for all but a few schools, it was an aisle or a gallery in the parish church; long, old-fashioned services, whose tedium was relieved by frank misconduct and occasional punishment. Now a chapel is

rightly considered among the first necessities for the equipment of a school, and in the services all care is taken to win and hold the attention of minds not irreverent, but easily tired and distracted; and as a result the chapel has come to be one of the centres of school life. Many boys now, far more than would readily confess it, really love the services and miss them in the holidays. Old boys, when they come back, must see the chapel, must worship there once more, though their college chapel knows them not, nor their parish church at home. And we cannot doubt that what is to some only a sentimental charm of memory, is to some also an abiding bond, the basis of a reasonable habit of devotion.

The effect of the ordinary Sunday and daily services on the religious character must be largely cumulative and unconscious, acting rather by force of long and sacred association than by any novelty of appeal; and there is always the danger of familiarity passing into indifference instead of love; for the school at large, chiefly when they are given, or choose to take, too little part in the singing and responding; for the choir, when too much is put on them, and the least idea creeps in that the service is a musical performance first and an act of worship second. For a school choir, though it is pleasing and in a sense true to regard them as specially privileged to minister in the sanctuary, are really more or less sacrificed to

the common good, exposed to peculiar risks of irreverence and hardness. There are few less edifying sights than a choir repeating the Lord's Prayer with their lips, while their hands and eyes are busy finding the chants for the Psalms; and this is only typical of the general religious attitude of choir boys and men where worship is subordinated to music. Hence follows the great importance of having a man of really Christian mind for choir-master if it be possible: for it is only success, only the raising of the devotional tone of the school as a whole, that justifies the risk of having a chapel choir at all.

On the question of Holy Communion, I do not intend to speak at any length here. It is a matter so personal and sacred that general observations on it would be out of place. The Communion is the one voluntary service at school, so the attendance at it should be the best test of religious feeling. The number of communicants at most schools is all that could be desired. But when one sees, as I saw the other day, practically all the confirmed boys of a great school remain to kneel in turn before the Holy Table, delightful and touching as the sight was, it gave rise to thoughts not wholly comforting. The duty of 'fencing the Tables,' of explaining what is fitness and unfitness for approaching the Sacrament, is one which taxes all the wisdom and courage of the most experienced pastor; but it cannot, in

honour, be shirked. I think no boy I ever knew would go to Communion with the deliberate intention of giving a false impression of his piety; but of those who went carelessly, or as a part of routine, or because they knew we liked to see them there, I fear there were some.

The sermon, like the service, has undergone great changes, mainly for the better. Much has been done to draw it down from the region of dull abstraction, and to meet boys on their own ground: perhaps too much; for what the Message loses in dignity it does not necessarily gain in effect. We profit nothing if we exchange the old high-and-dry convention for a still more distressing convention of sanctified sprightliness which is supposed to appeal to the young. It is not given to every man to be a power in the pulpit; but so long as the Church of England takes it for granted that the gift of prophecy is conferred at ordination, all ordained colleagues must take their turn once a term at least: only for most of us the smooth stones from the brook are a safer equipment than the armour of Saul. Boys are the best listeners a preacher can have: so good that much preaching in school chapels spoils a man for general congregations. He is apt to be fidgeted by the bland inattention of parts of the average parish audience. But if they listen, it does not necessarily follow that they are impressed. In fact they are the sharpest of

critics, curiously discriminating, and quite merciless in their disapproval. They will discover and accept sincerity of purpose underlying almost any defects of style and delivery, especially from a man they know and trust; but anything pretentious, anything that rings false, is instantly noted and condemned. Boys hate being preached down to, and are quick to detect the condescension. Least of all do they tolerate the robust breezy preacher who addresses them as 'fellows,' and interlards his discourse with what he believes to be current school slang. They will listen to him with open-eyed attention; but when he has displayed the intimate acquaintance with the private life of his hearers which neither he nor any other adult possesses, he may rest assured that they think him an ass, and that his most striking phrases will circulate as humorous catch-words for the rest of the term. It is not often, to be sure, that the regular staff of a public school are guilty of such eccentricities in the pulpit: they come rather from well-meaning strangers who are anxious to exhibit their sympathy, and to get into touch with their audience; especially from the more or less authorised school Missioners who are allowed to appear in our school pulpits from time to time. I have the highest opinion of the good-will of these worthy gentlemen; but their methods are mistaken, and calculated to hinder more than they help. Revivalist methods are not good for

boys, and it is an error of policy to approach a public school as if it were an East End slum or a heathen tribe. Serious-minded boys are annoyed and puzzled, and the unregenerate are openly derisive; at most one or two worthless lads are got hold of for a time, a poor compensation for the general unsettlement. If the religious life of a school is to be wholesome and progressive, the headmaster must be the centre and director of it. His position gives him a claim on the respect of the boys which they are not slow to allow. His sermons are looked forward to, and heard with more than ordinary care. A headmaster should make his preaching, as many do make it, a chief means of reaching and influencing boys of all ages. There are things to be said to the school which he can say, and they can hear, perhaps, at no other time. And in proportion as he is trusted, his words will gain influence, sober, deep, and lasting, the influence which shapes character, and inspires effort, and wins to renunciation.

We do not want emotional religion for our boys. We have all seen too much of the ready flood of tears, the passionate protestations of repentance and amendment, so heartfelt, so fleeting. Only schoolmasters fully know, and this is not the place to enlarge on it, how strong and dangerous the emotional nature is during part of the school age. It sounds odd in the light of popular

conceptions, but what most boys need, for a time at least, is to be kept manly and wholesome and prosaic. The religion they want is not a religion of feeling and excitement, but a sane conviction of responsibility to God and man, a belief that what they do and say and think really matters, and has its results in their own lives and other lives. And this is hard to teach schoolboys because their life is full of conventions, and they are so largely protected from the consequences of their own actions. In a highly artificial society like a school many acts not wrong in themselves must be constituted offences against discipline, and visited with arbitrary punishment; and they are very properly looked on as wholly expiated and cancelled by that punishment. When a boy has been whipped for smoking or going out of bounds, there is no more to be said: discipline has been vindicated: the account is squared. This we can all understand, and it is just and salutary. But the boy often fails to draw a distinction, and extends indulgence to a much wider circle of unlawful acts. In too many schools tradition justifies systematic shirking of work, cribbing, and lying to a master who is 'engaged 'in the discharge of his official duties.' In some schools it goes a good deal farther, and covers a considerable amount of cruelty and worse. It is the difficult part of the religious teacher to make boys see sin as sin, with its inevitable conse-

quences, quite apart from the question of detection and punishment.

Again, in spite of all the virtues of a public school training, even because of its virtues, it does not tend to promote humility and unselfishness From the time he is thirteen or less till he is twenty-three, it is taught as gospel to our young Englishman that he is a member of an exclusive and aristocratic guild, of which his own school and college are the crown and flower. This belief, like all *esprit de corps*, is most valuable if rightly directed, but it produces a form of selfishness, more subtle and harder to combat, because it is not individual but corporate selfishness, which compounds for total indifference to all without the pale by an exaggerated regard, mostly theoretical, for those within. In its higher manifestations it is a very noble feeling though narrow, in its lower there is no more vulgar class pride ; and always it is likely to stunt the mental and moral growth unless it is checked by the more liberal spirit of Christianity. It is partly to inspire this wider feeling of responsibility that public school missions have been founded in London and other towns, and the scheme is in many ways admirable. But it requires almost superhuman energy, tact, and enthusiasm in those who manage them to make them mean more to the average boy than a terminal sermon and one or more allowances withdrawn from more congenial expenditure. These

missions have their use, their great use, rather as an outlet for the spirit of philanthropy which has been fostered in other ways, and rests on a surer foundation than opportunity.

I do not think that these two feelings so alien to the natural *ethos* of youth and happiness, the sense of the seriousness of life, and the sense of the universal obligation of service, can be implanted except as the result of a rational belief in God. And when the result is present in an appreciable and increasing measure, we must be content to acknowledge the presence of the cause, and not attempt to pry too closely into its hidden workings. It is our duty to set the issues of life and death before boys with unflinching plainness at all times, and especially at Confirmation; but it is not well, if it were possible, for us to know what lies only between the individual soul and its Creator. All boys have a great reticence as to their deeper thoughts; and this reticence, though it may be carried to absurd and inconvenient lengths, is a sound and honourable instinct. We must respect it, and neither conclude that there are no deeper thoughts, nor resolve to unveil them at all hazards. Every schoolmaster has to learn that he is cut off from much of the private life of the boys who like him best; and those who care most understand soonest that this is inevitable and even desirable. But from time to time even religious confidences will come to

the man who deserves them; possibly not from the boys he likes best, for it is perfect trust rather than intimacy which inspires them; and not always at the times and in the ways that he would choose. But if he can accept them loyally, and meet them not with coldness or platitude, but with understanding sympathy, it may be his happiness to give to a young soul in its trouble and loneliness the very help it needs. With long experience a man may learn even to invite such confidences, and to offer opportunities in ways perceived only by those who are ready for them. He may offer opportunities, but he must ever be on his guard against the temptation, strongest for the best men, of forcing them on the unwilling and the unready; for there failure is imminent, success fatal. It is bad enough when the timid are scared into sullen silence or the indifferent exasperated into flippancy by such well-meant violence; but there is worse than this. Many a really devout boy resents the ill-timed attempt upon his soul's privacy with a feeling not far removed from outraged modesty; and the influence rudely grasped is lost for ever. And with minds of less delicacy and courage a reluctant capitulation may be followed by a kind of pleasure in communicating spiritual symptoms which must be cultivated if they are not there; and straightway a prig and a liar is in the making.

An important factor in the problem, which

parents and teachers find it hard to realise, is that, in spite of the forces of heredity and environment, the boy is ultimately not A's son or B's pupil, but himself: he has a personality which is developing very fast in these years along lines which no human director can lay down for it. The difference between a boy at fourteen and the same boy two or three years later is striking —the one docile and receptive to a fault, living on approval, eager apparently to say and do what you tell him, and equally amenable, no doubt, to quite contrary influences as soon as he is out of your sight; the other proud and shy, impatient of control and suspicious of praise, liable to extremes of obstinacy and diffidence. It must be confessed that the young gentleman at this stage is often an enigma and a nuisance to his friends. But it is the part of a wise elder to be very patient, to interfere little and tactfully, even, it may be, to admit with sorrow that the day of his influence is at an end, and that the child he has led by the hand must henceforth walk alone or with other guides. It is as disagreeable as it is salutary for us to confess, even to ourselves, that the waters of Abana and Pharpar, which suit us so well, have lost their efficacy in the case of those we care for; but it is an experience which comes to most of us sooner or later. Every generation, every individual in some degree, has its own relations with God and the world, which are the

best for it: and seem not the best to others whose conditions are different. The tragedy of Mr. Goodwin and John Tempest will be played out again and again as long as the world lasts, wherever children are being trained up with care and affection.

But I am come in danger of lecturing on a subject which is chiefly interesting to those who least need instruction. No one who has not tried can really understand the difficulties; every one who has seriously taken the task in hand knows, better than I can tell him, that the way of the religious teacher is marked by failures and disappointments, by opportunities lost and opportunities misused: and he knows, too, that in spite of all there is progress, because God does better with us than we deserve.

I have tried to show that there is no short cut and royal road to making boys religious, and that to be in a hurry is to lose time. And this is not surprising if we consider that Christianity is essentially, not a system of ritual, not a moral code, not a theological formula, but a habit of mind, founded on a right conception of God, and determining the whole outlook on life and the world. I have tried, too, to show that boys are not naturally averse from religious impressions; that they are quick to discern and admire sincerity, so that genuine piety in man or boy wins their respect and influences them more than they know.

I think I am not an optimist. I realise the dark side of school life, the cruelty, the uncleanness, the dishonesty; and I know how much has yet to be done before our public schools are perfectly what they were meant to be, nurseries of godliness and good learning. But I believe that there exists in them the love and fear of God, not articulate for the most part, nor self-conscious, but with a living and growing force, and stronger than evil.

RELIGIO PUERI—II[1]

It is, I fear, impossible to leave the subject of Religious Education in the pleasant twilight of a paper written seven and a half years ago by one who had but lately ceased to be a public school master. Since 1901 I have been rudely shaken out of the ignorance which is complacently admitted in the first lines of that paper[2]; and shaken, unfortunately not into enlightenment, but into complete bewilderment and perplexity. The reader, however, will not be asked to accompany me into the latest complications of what is ironically called the Education Controversy. There is doubtless a great deal to be said about it, which shall not be said here. For the present, at any rate, it appears to have passed out of the realm of argument into the arena of party strife; and counsels more weighty, and based on better information and experience than mine, fall idly on the ears of combatants who will not listen, and non-combatants who are thoroughly tired of the whole affair. To ask my readers to set aside the ecclesiastico-political aspect of the question altogether is a counsel of perfection: but if we must

[1] January 1909. [2] p. 141.

regard it, we may safely regard it chiefly as obscuring the real issues.

The real issue, probably the most important of the present day, is to discover and apply the religious education which is possible and desirable for the young, in face of the conditions which are set forth in the third, fourth, and fifth chapters of the first part of this book.[1] The extreme solutions of the problem which are proposed are, on the one hand, to ignore the new conditions altogether, except so far as it is possible to anathematise their exponents effectually, and adhere strictly to the mediæval conceptions of religious doctrine and practice, which, I may point out, are cherished not only by the Church of Rome, but by a great deal of very sincere Protestant and Nonconformist Orthodoxy. On the other hand there is a growing tendency, in view of the impossibility of deciding where doctors disagree, to give up the whole thing in despair; to teach children reading, writing, and arithmetic with such extras as may be found desirable; and let them pick up their religion for themselves as best they can. It is to be observed that this method of education, hitherto generally repudiated in theory, is widely followed in practice, and that not only, nor chiefly, for the children of the poorer classes.

Most sane people, however, are agreed that neither of these extremes is what they want,

[1] pp. 27 foll.

and feel that there must be a *via media*, if it could only be discovered and accepted, an education truly religious and at the same time fitted to meet conditions which are simply a normal stage in the evolution of mankind. In the hope of receiving some practical suggestions as to the nature of that *via media*, it may be worth while to examine the extremes a little further, in order to understand if possible the principles for which the sincere advocates of each are contending: because it is likely that whatever elements in them are true and vital will be found also in the ideal solution.

My criticism of the first of these extremes may be expressed conveniently in the form of a parable drawn from the now fashionable volume of Medical Science. The attitude of the unbending mediævalist towards religious thought corresponds closely to the popular view of sanitation founded on an imperfect acquaintance with the germ theory of the causation of disease. The man-in-the-street, if one may judge from his conversation and from the journals which express his opinions, regards microbes as malignant creatures, roughly speaking about the size of a gnat, which go about in droves seeking whom they may devour. The great thing is to keep them out of the system. It is the business of science to keep them out, with wire netting of larger or finer mesh, as sparrows are kept out of a church, or bluebottles out of a larder. When,

as unfortunately sometimes happens, they do get in, their unwilling host is instantly stricken with the disease which they represent, and the only thing to do is to poison off the microbes, like rats in a house, by the exhibition of suitable drugs. The more advanced thinkers of this school are also aware that they keep cats called leucocytes to assist in keeping down vermin. But bacteriological amateurs as a class are agreed in thinking that all microbes are bad and dangerous things, and the less you have to do with them the better; and they hope that if they are fortunate and judicious they may have practically nothing to do with them. The blessed word *Sterilisation* breathes peace to their souls.

Now this view, which is supported by popular scientific journalism, and by Disinfectant Advertisements, and receives a kind of official confirmation from the idiotic practice of sprinkling a little pink powder near sewer gratings, and pretending it 'kills the germs,' is not wholly false: it gives a highly coloured account of one side of the facts. But it is not scientifically valuable, because it completely ignores at least two other classes of facts of equal and counterbalancing importance in the study of the question. In the first place not all 'germs' are malignant. Science has discovered the existence of beneficent micro-organisms which are necessary to the processes of animal and vegetable life. The real problem in

the treatment of zymotic disease is to kill the pathogenic germs without killing the beneficent ones—and the patient. Too successful sterilisation is death. And second, although prevention, which does not mean carbolic acid, but common-sense and personal and domestic cleanliness, has done much, and in the near future should do far more to check the spread of disease, it remains true that few people pass a day of their lives without absorbing enough pathogenic germs to kill a regiment; and so everybody ought to be dead, and everybody would be dead except for the fortunate fact that a healthy body can deal with myriads of hostile microbes and be none the worse for it.

Which things are an allegory. To one school of religious thought new ideas are spiritual microbes, essentially evil, and to be kept out at any cost. There is the same pathetic belief in mechanical safeguards and exorcisms, the same ignorance of the facts of life. For here, too, as in the natural world, sterilisation is impossible; and, if I may carry the parallel a step farther, an organism which has been long artificially protected from infection is liable to take the disease in its most malignant form. The purpose of Religious Education must be to send out men and women not only essentially sound and wholesome, but specially prepared for the ordeal they will have to face. Experience and knowledge, inoculation

under favourable circumstances, will give immunity from attack, or reduce the danger of a fatal issue to a minimum. The new ideas are in the air. Every growing boy or girl who thinks and reads at all is certain to come in contact with them, and they insensibly affect also those who do not think or read in any serious sense. And if they are suddenly brought upon a mind which has not been warned of their existence, or has been taught to regard them as absurd and abominable, and now finds much in them which is reasonable and attractive, there is a great risk of a violent reaction in which the essentials of faith are sometimes swept away with the fences that have been put up to protect them.

This purpose of Education, a reasonable knowledge and preparedness, will clearly not be any better secured by the other extreme I have mentioned, what is commonly known as Secular Education; and apparently the mass of opinion in this country at least is still opposed to that solution of the difficulty: though it must be admitted that the excessive difficulty of arriving at any agreement begins to make it a possible if not the inevitable solution. But even here there is, for most people, no question of really secular education; the proposal is that the State should content itself with secular instruction, and the Church teach Religion; and there is a good

deal to be said for it. There is, however, a very serious danger of secular education for children of all classes—the danger that a generation of parents, bewildered with new lights, and losing their grasp on the old formulas, may, from indifference or honest doubt, allow their children to learn their religion from outside, as a thing to be talked about and analysed, not a thing to be lived; and allow them to learn it from teachers who make it one lesson, and rather a dull one, among other lessons. That experience of Religious Education is probably not unknown to any boy who has passed through the forms of a public school, nor altogether to girls in the schoolroom at home. I do not say it is the rule; and the influence of a teacher of religion who was also a religious teacher has seen the turning-point in many young lives: but the other way of teaching religion is too common, and is encouraged by the system which allows so-called Religious Knowledge to rank as a mark-getting subject in examinations, a system which cannot be too strongly deprecated.

But after all the real question, which earnest parents and teachers are asking with anxiety, the question which by its existence gives careless parents and teachers an excuse for neglecting religious teaching or making it non-religious, is the question which I have put on the first page

of this paper. What can we, educated and thoughtful believers, safely and honestly teach our children on the great subject which so closely concerns their temporal and eternal welfare?

Before I attempt to give my answer to that question I must draw a distinction which is often forgotten; the resultant confusion of thought is, I believe, the cause of many of our troubles and controversies. Religion is One, as God is One; but it has two aspects—the Moral and the Intellectual. In other words it may be regarded as an Art or a Science. The Moral Aspect, moral in the largest sense, Religion viewed as the Art of right living in relation to God and man, occupied, as all must admit, by far the greater part of Our Lord's recorded teaching, and is therefore probably the more important aspect, the ultimate expression of Religion. It must be learned, if it is to be learned at all, on Sundays and week-days, in school and out of school; more from parents and kindred, and those who stand in a parental or fraternal relation to the learner, than from professional teachers as such; more by precept than example. Proficiency in it, as in any other art, is to be attained only by unwearied practice for many years, superadded to some degree of inspiration. The text-book of this art is the record of the Life and Teaching of Jesus of Nazareth in the first three Gospels, together with the easier parts of St. John's Gospel taken in

their simplest sense. There is surely an antecedent probability, supported by a considerable mass of evidence, that the earnest study of this text-book will effect its purpose, without the need of commentary beyond the translation of hard words and phrases for beginners; and that it, if anything, will produce the dogmatic result of a working belief in Jesus Christ. But such a study of the Gospels can only become general in an environment of earnest religious life; and this consideration suggests the advisability of converting the large mass of adult English men and women as a step to securing religious education for the children.

The problem of converting and retaining adult believers at once involves the other aspect of Religion—which, however, affects the children also—the Intellectual aspect including the Ecclesiastical; the Science of Doctrine and Ceremonial. This aspect has been treated above as less important than the other; and so in a sense it is, being concerned not with the end of religion, but with means. Yet as a means to the end it is of profound if secondary importance, and, since man is body and mind as well as spirit, indispensable. The appeal to the will must be made through the intellect and the senses. Purely spiritual religion, the direct Communion of the Soul and God without the mediation of senses or intellect, has been granted to mystics and saints, and is

granted to all Christians in so far as they are truly saints and mystics; but for average humanity it is a hardly attained ideal, the crown of long years of striving and believing; and Religious Education is not directly concerned with it, for it cometh not with observation. To propound this as the general rule, and as the only real religion, is to show a singular ignorance of human nature. Unto the perfected Christian, if such there be on earth, God may speak 'face to face, as a man 'speaketh unto his friend,'[1] but to babes, whether in age or in spiritual experience, their religion must be mediated through the human faculties of perception and understanding. The Ritual and Ceremonial of the Church are framed to instruct the mind through the eye and the ear, and the soul through the mind. Some wise and good persons are apparently convinced that the soul can safely be approached by the auditory passages only, and hold 'spectacular' for a word of just reprobation when applied to religious services. The distinction, however, is probably unsound; and experience seems to show that this kind of appeal also has its legitimate place; and supports the opinion of a shrewd critic of human nature—

> 'Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem
> Quam quæ sunt oculis subiecta fidelibus.'[2]

[1] Exodus xxxiii. 2.
[2] Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 180, 181.

The visible society itself is the Sacramental expression of the central Truth of the Incarnation, that believers are one with Christ and one in Christ—an object-lesson in loyalty, if I may be pardoned the heresy of saying it, not to a National Church, but to the Church Catholic. Every service from the greatest to the least, conveys in terms of hearing and sight, some eternal truth whereof the essence belongs to the soul, and will reach the soul if the form be properly understood. But the science of these things, the knowledge of their meaning and relation to the inner purpose of Religion, must be learned, like any other science, first by instruction from the expert, and then by actual experiment. The instruction is that real 'preparation for Confirmation' which begins, not six or seven weeks before the Rite is administered by the Bishop, but as soon as the baptized child is old enough to learn. And that instruction, if it is really to be assimilated, must be enforced and supplemented through life by the 'practical work' of a regular and intelligent use of the Services of the Church, especially of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. There is a great deal said just now about the difficulty of the Prayer Book and its unsuitableness for general use: and doubtless it would be a good thing if the clergy had more liberty in framing services for the use of beginners in the Faith, and other special purposes. But for instructed believers,

instructed so far as any intelligent Christian could be and ought to be, complaints of hard phrases and archaisms of language are absurd. It would be a questionable gain to translate its pages into the dialect of modern journalism, as has already been done with the Bible. The difficulties that people find with the Prayer Book are mainly due to their not using it as it was intended to be used, systematically and continuously. In one sense it is hard to master because it contains a great deal that is worth learning. A practical acquaintance with the Year of Worship which it provides, and with some of its Occasional Offices is a liberal education in the things necessary to salvation.

The Book of Common Prayer, however admirable, is not universally accepted by Christians, and the things necessary to salvation may undoubtedly be learned without its use; or, in other words, Ritual and Ceremonial may vary and do vary in the different branches of the Church Catholic, and no fatal harm results. But in the estimate of most of us the Bible is a different matter; and the question which presses hard upon our minds and consciences in this day of criticism and new knowledge, is the question of the Bible. What are we to teach the children on the points which are debated, and those which seem in a fair way to be settled in another sense than that in which our fathers settled them? It

is, in fact, a very delicate question of casuistry, not to be answered straight off; a question in which the right course can only be found by clear sense and goodwill, and must largely be determined by the circumstances of each case. The first duty of the teacher, as well as his best policy, is to be quite honest and loyal to truth. We must never tell children a thing is true if we do not know it to be true: and, *as the questions arise for them*, we are bound to give them the true answer as far as it is known to us; and if we do not know, to say we do not know. The Nemesis of insincerity is certain, and in these days swift, and it falls not only on the teacher but on the pupil, who is tempted to reject altogether beliefs which seemed to have needed the support of falsehood. But with all honesty, we must have kindness and common-sense, and above all try to remember, or find out from some one who does remember, what a child's mind is like. We are constantly being told that the men who wrote and collected the Scriptures had no conception of what we mean by Historical Truth. Now most children belong intellectually to that uncritical age, and are very little concerned about the exact accuracy of the stories which please and edify them. They are very keen critics of truth of values, but care very little about truth of fact. That interest belongs to the adult age of the world and of man's life, and will come to them

soon enough. When it does come, it will be the duty of the wise teacher to guide the nascent historical and scientific sense to a right discernment between the temporal and the eternal elements of the Bible, and thus to guard it against the assault of a crude and exaggerated scepticism. Before all he will beware of wounding and blunting the moral sense in the interests of a supposed orthodoxy. He will not defend or palliate the craft of Jacob, the astute statesmanship by which Joseph caused the whole of the land in Egypt to pass into the hands of Pharaoh,[1] the savage treachery of Jael, the murder of a prisoner of war by Samuel; but will rightly explain the apparent approval of such acts by Jehovah and His chosen servants as belonging not to the God of Mercy and Justice, but to the ethics of an age which was just passing out of barbarism. This duty of prizing above all things truth in that which we teach, and the sense of truth in those whom we teach, is laid upon us all by the God of Truth; and it is the only safe guide where so much is dark and doubtful.

But dark and doubtful as the outlook may be, let us take comfort in the belief, which stands the test of experience, that the real Religious Education is that which every generation of Christian children from the beginning have learned from

[1] Gen. xlvii. 13.

their mothers—to know Jesus, and to love Him, and be good children for His sake. If that is there for the foundation, what comes after can do no harm, rather it must do good, for we are resolved that it shall be the Teaching of the Truth in Love.

UNIVERSITIES[1]

A SUBJECT set for consideration at the Manchester Church Congress, which has just been brought to a close, was the relation of the Church to the new Universities. In the discussion one of the speakers emphasised the necessity, not, of course, of securing or safeguarding, but of recognising frankly and loyally the undenominational character of these Universities. Now undenominationalism and its positive form denominationalism, are words which I hope we have all at least ceased to like. I, at any rate, am sorry that they should have to be used. I am sorry that the Church of England is not to-day in the fullest and widest sense the Church in England, that it cannot at present include and satisfy the needs of all truly Christian people in this land. But meanwhile we must look facts in the face; and whatever may be in times to come the relations of the Church with the new Universities, there is a question which goes deeper than external agreements and differences, and is urgent to-day and all days, the question of the relation of the Universities, new and old, to the Kingdom of God.

[1] Birmingham Cathedral, before the University, Oct. 11, 1908.

'Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye 'are called.' What then is the vocation, the duty, to which the Universities, as such, are called by God? In the Middle Ages that would have been an easy question to answer, at any rate in theory; for in the mediæval University scholastic theology sat throned on high, supreme. All the other branches of learning, all the other sciences were ancillary, were but her handmaids; they were not ministers only, as we think of Ministers of State, or of the Heads of Departments in a great business or a great household, each supreme within its own sphere and governed only by the rules and canons of that sphere, really responsible only for the right performance of its duty; they were regarded as utterly subject and subordinate. Theology, like the wise woman in the Proverbs, dealt out her tasks to her maid-servants, and saw that they did that which she gave them to do, that only, that in her way, none other, nor otherwise.

Now, strange as it may seem, this is the conception still maintained, at least by the official teaching of one great branch of Christ's Church. It is this above all things which on the Continent, in France, and Italy and Germany, has aroused the passionate protests of loyal Roman Catholic priests and laymen, who desire to pursue their studies free and unfettered; to be allowed to walk by the rules and methods which they have learnt to be the right ones; to be allowed to face, un-

flinchingly, the conclusions to which those methods carry them. Whatever we may think of the Modernists and the Modernist movement, we must allow that we are at least indebted to them for this: that they have restated and insisted upon the principle that those who are or who profess to be the guardians of the truth, must be careful above all things and before all things of truthfulness. They must not use what is not true to guard what is true. But I have spoken elsewhere about the Modernists. The question for us is: What possible place can such a conception as that of which I have spoken, what possible place can it have in the modern Universities of free England, all of them founded on what we may call frankly secular lines, some of them possessing no faculty of theology whatever, and all of them insisting first and foremost upon the absolute freedom of study, upon the absolute obligation of intellectual sincerity; in such a society as that, what place can this conception find? Surely none. Well, no, not none; for strange and even fantastic as it seems to us to-day, yet like all other theories that have had a real hold upon the human mind, that have done work in the training of human nature and thought, it is based upon truth. That which is temporal, that which is artificial in it, is passing away: for us it has passed away; but that which is true, that which is eternal, remains and shall

remain, and we have to reckon with it. And in order that we may so face it and reckon with it, let us ask once more, What is the vocation to which you are called? What is the meaning of the springing into life of a University of Birmingham? Well, first of all, and very important, is doubtless what we may call the practical and, in the highest sense, the material reason for your being as a University—to open the treasure-house of learning that it may be no longer guarded by the closed doors of privilege, only to be opened to the few; to open the treasure-house of learning—not to all—that is a thing which nothing can do—not even a millionaire; but to those who are worthy; not alone to those who are rich, well-born, or have this irrelevant claim or that, but to all those who are worthy, all those who are capable of getting and giving good in a place of learning. But it is more than that. It opens not only learning, but the career for which learning fits men and women, the career of earning for oneself an honourable livelihood in conditions and by means which are congenial, and, being congenial, educate and improve the character and the intellect; that alone is a high vocation for a University. It is a very important thing; it is the basis of all self-respecting life—of a life that is real, moral, and intellectual, that we should be able to earn our living—to pay our bills and not be dependent.

The Ideal Vocation

But, of course, that is not all. What the Germans call 'bread studies' are not the end, at least, of the aims of a University. There is the higher, what we may call the ideal vocation, though it, too, is not impracticable, and that is the search for truth. Now here I may seem to some of you, and especially to some among the younger, to be rather in the air, to be speaking merely of ideals, or, at any rate, to be speaking chiefly to those who are far more advanced, far cleverer, more learned than you are—the professors and so on. But, as a matter of fact, it touches you just as much as it touches the greatest man of science or of letters in the world, because it is the spirit that matters. If you are just fighting for your own hand, if you are just seeing how most easily and shortly you can get through the examinations, what information you can pick up that will serve in life, then you are not really doing an unworthy thing, but you are not acting as a loyal member of a University. The difference is this: in all your studies, even in the most elementary, keep this fact in mind, that what you want to learn is not what will pay, but what *is*. And that, if you will think of it, is a very sacred thing, and brings us back to that conception which we dismissed just now; because theology is not a narrow thing—

a thing of definitions and distinctions. If you take it in its real meaning it means the knowledge of God and God's Truth; and all truth, whatever its immediate value, is of God. What we want to learn is what *is*, and let us remember that when the God of Israel, who is our God, was asked by Moses by what name He should be worshipped, He said, I AM is My Name—Truth, Reality.

Now this thought, that all truth is of God, has been greatly and fatally forgotten in past times; it has been very freely forgotten by men of my calling; it has been forgotten by the priests and the theologians. We have wanted—and it is a desire which is not peculiar to us—we have wanted to clip and shape truths into forms which suited our hypothesis of the world. It has been forgotten—and that not long ago—quite as much by the men of science. They, a little while ago, were very sorely tempted to say that there was no truth outside their immediate sphere, outside their methods of criticism, outside their researches, outside what they could see and weigh and measure. But notably within the last few years both sides have begun to remember; the Church of England, at any rate, has given up the attempt to curb and guide science after its own fancies. And the scientific people have certainly begun to realise that there are things just as real outside as there are inside their immediate sphere.

Three Great Studies

There are three great branches of learning which have perhaps especial value, or so it seems to me, in reference to this question of the relation of the Universities to the Kingdom of God; and they are all such as belong particularly, in their methods at any rate, to the new Universities.

The first of them is the modern science of history, which includes to-day the whole science of criticism—textual, linguistic, and literary; and that is very much in the minds of intelligent religious people to-day, because it is on it for the moment that the Modernist controversy turns. And the historians and critics have got to tell us first what really it was that Jesus did and spoke when He was on earth; and then to tell us of the history of the Church, what things in it are permanent and real and essential—what things, perhaps, that we value very highly and cling to are merely the trappings and the externals of the life of the Church. And in order that we may understand the history of the Church, they have to set before us, as they can, the whole history of God's dealings with mankind — pagan and Christian.

The next branch of learning is biology in its widest sense—biology the science, the knowledge of Life. It has already carried us back countless æons to an unimagined antiquity, following life

by its traces in the rocks and the fossils; it teaches us through physiology how to study the actual processes of life in the present; it teaches us the wonders of our bodies and of our existence. And now there is the future—surely a wondrous future, because I think I am right in saying that it is realised that no science of life, no biology, can be complete which does not reckon with man's soul as well as man's body. And there I see a hope, a hope that we may yet achieve what we have never had yet, and that is a real science of psychology, a study by scientific methods, without partiality, without preconceptions of the conditions of man's mental and spiritual life.

Third and last there is the study of mankind not now in history, not now as a separate living being, but as he lives and as he must needs live, in societies. From economics and sociology we of the Church have great things to ask. I have heard Birmingham spoken of, with a slightly contemptuous inflection perhaps, as a commercial University. Now that combination is the very one thing that we want to-day. We are all waking up to the knowledge that the conditions of society in which we live pretty comfortably are intolerable to the educated conscience—that men and women and children are being ground to death in order that the wheels of our life may run easily. That we

can see; that we are beginning to realise; but for the most part we have not the least idea how it is to be cured or even bettered. If we are ever to find out the cure we must have real business men, men who are occupied with the actual conduct of business, who yet have the University element in them, who have trained habits of thought, trained not only in business methods, but in the power of observing and collecting and comparing facts, and drawing from the facts their right inferences and conclusions. Those are the men, those and no other are the men, if any, who can answer for us that riddle of the Sphinx which is perplexing all thoughtful men to-day, and threatens if we do not answer it swiftly to devour us.

In these and in countless other ways you are called to help forward the Kingdom of God. In these ways you can help us, and in these ways you must help us; you cannot help helping us if you are doing your duties, and we are doing ours. Perhaps some of the help is rather disguised. Some Churchmen are frightened of the advance made, particularly in those three sciences of which I have spoken. They do not like to see the Bible treated like any other book. I suppose they are afraid it will fall to pieces. They do not like to see men fearlessly pushing their inquiries into the conditions of life in order that hereafter they may know something of life itself. They are frightened

of what they call Socialism; they are afraid the political and economic order in which they have grown accustomed to live—and on which they honestly think Christianity and society depend—may be disturbed, as indeed it may. But it ought not to be so. Christians, Churchmen or non-Churchmen, ought not to be afraid. To be afraid shows want of faith. It is because we do not believe in God clearly enough—we do not believe what we are told, that all things work together for good for him that believeth. Now, surely, the sincere and impartial study of what God is and what God has done cannot be hurtful to that religious belief which is a belief in the God of Truth. But there is another view of it, perhaps. We think of all these things as in the world. We think that they deal with our bodies, our history, our minds—that it is all the approaching of God through man. We think, perhaps, that theology, the knowledge of God, ought to come down to earth, revealed, or drawn by deduction from revelation. But who said, 'Inasmuch as ye have done 'it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye 'have done it unto Me'?

What, then, is the vocation of a University? Surely it is to move forward, unshrinking, unhasting, unresting, towards the distant goal; a goal where our apparently divergent studies and interests will meet, where they will all, like the colours of the spectrum, join into the single white

ray, and all be used to illuminate the eternal figure of Truth, the image of the invisible God in all its beauty, in all its grandeur, in all its convincing power; the Image of Truth personified and incarnate in the Perfect Man—the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

MARRIAGE[1]

THE subject of Christian Marriage, whether we reverence it as a Sacrament, or are content to view it merely as a state of life allowed in the Scriptures, is one which above others needs wary walking. On the one hand it is hedged about by weighty sanctions of Canon and Civil Law, and fenced in with the still more ominous Tapu of immemorial custom. It savours of presumption to discuss as an open question what the wisdom of our forefathers has settled once for all. Moreover it is further obscured for our instinct, if not for our intellect, by the Manichean theories of Asceticism which have never lost their hold on Christian thought. On the other hand it involves at once the largest social problems, and the most intimate personal sentiment ;—sentiment which is partly silly and even prurient, and safely to be dismissed without consideration ; but much of it also so sacred, that even to speak of it is, in some measure, to encroach upon the inviolable privacy, not of the family only, but of the individual soul.

Therefore, to treat such a subject with autho-

[1] Pan-Anglican Congress, 1908.

rity requires a profound and sympathetic knowledge of the social conditions and inner lives of men in other times, classes, and countries, as well as our own; to speak of it with sincerity and acceptance demands a habit of mind finely tempered of frankness and delicacy—and a power of exact and noble expression which is the peculiar heritage of the poet.

It follows then that I must renounce the hope of expressing my meaning in a manner which will cause it to be gladly received by all who hear me. I must be content with sincerity; and for that I ask a hearing, patient, and as sincere as I shall try to make my utterance.

If we are to do any good, we must try to set aside our prejudices, our likes and dislikes, and to recognise loyally what is known of the facts of social and individual life which are concerned with and influenced by marriage; and further we must be scrupulously honest in our efforts to ascertain what is the real and essential teaching of Christianity. That is the condition on which we can hope that our discussion of such a subject as this will issue in wise and fruitful counsels.

1. It appears convenient, in the first place, to formulate, and if necessary to criticise, the Canon which we intend to apply in our judgment of the facts, and in our practical conclusions. Viewed in one aspect, the appointed task of Christianity

has been to de-orientalise marriage. Let me pause for a moment on the phrase and explain exactly what it is intended to convey.

The Oriental conception of marriage treats woman not as a person at all, but as a chattel, held in absolute ownership by her lord, and valued chiefly for physical qualities. She is perhaps the best of a man's possessions, but ranks with *them* and not with him, as we can see in the text of the Tenth Commandment. Our sensibilities are naturally shocked by a crude statement of this view of the marital relation; but the spirit of it is not without influence to this day on the thought of the Western world. Greek poetry, it is true, offers us a nobler ideal of womanhood, but it is not in marriage that it finds its highest and most characteristic expression. In its consummate achievement, the *Antigone* of Sophocles, a sister's devotion, not the love of a wife, is the mainspring of the tragedy. And without dwelling on those darker aspects of Greek civilisation which kept Woman from her rightful place, we may note in passing that the conception of romantic love, between man and woman, which, however fantastic and distorted, still regards Woman as an entity in her own right, first emerges with Meleager of Gadara in the last century before Christ, long after the classic period had closed.

In republican Rome the bride passed from the

manus—the possession—of her father into the *manus* of her husband; and although in later days Roman women enjoyed a full measure of emancipation, it was at the cost of the dissolution of morals and the break-up of family life.

The Teutonic nations had from the first a wiser and juster view of the position of women. But the conditions of society during the long ages of the growth of civilisation gave a preponderating value to the qualities in which men admittedly excel—physical strength, courage, and energy—and the Civil Law, unchallenged by the religious feeling of the time, sanctioned and endorsed the implied comparison. A woman, unless she could vindicate her right by exceptional gifts, was viewed and treated as a pawn in the game of politics and property.

In the present day, while some of us cling to the old fallacy, we are confronted by a different, but, as it seems to me, an equally perilous misconception of the facts. With the advance of civilisation, and increased security of life, the mediæval theory has broken down. The English law of property has at last recognised a woman's right to her own possessions. Women demand, and are winning, full rights to their own labour, and their own intellectual endowments. In a protected and orderly Society they prepare to meet Man on his own ground, and claim, not only equality, but identity of function in the

social organisation. At the beginning of the twentieth century in England, Man and Woman are in process of becoming, no longer owner and chattel, no longer master and slave, but competitors in the struggle for life.

The true natural relation which it is the business of Christianity to present and maintain is very different. There can be no comparison, in the strict sense of the word, between beings not rival but complementary; each possessing qualities which are not found in the other, but are just those which are needed to give effect to the hitherto potential qualities of its correlative. Physically this is a truism. And in the sphere of emotion it is partly recognised; that is, it is admitted in the case of passion; but it is not always fully recognised with regard to that more sober and permanent marital affection, which is a higher power of friendship and comradeship. Before, however, we can arrive at a just conception of Christian marriage, that is, marriage in accordance with the whole law of our nature, this complementary relation must be extended to the whole realm of being, which has not forgotten that it was made in the image of God.

Such a marriage as this will be a free and equal compact, based upon instinctive and reasonable attraction, which is the outward visible sign of an inner mutual need, and a mutual power of

help and completion, valid for all the elements in the being of the chosen partner, body, soul, and spirit; a compact, therefore, which is permanent, not for convenience only, or by the law of man, but in its essence, because it touches things which are not subject to the limitations of place and time.

2. Now if the general enforcement of this ideal of marriage has been the appointed task of Christianity, it must be admitted that Christianity has, owing to various hindrances, advanced so slowly, and achieved so imperfectly, that it is still possible for a hostile critic to say that 'Christian doctrine exhibits the same contempt 'for Women which all Oriental religions mani-'fest,' without being instantly refuted by the common sense and experience of mankind. In other words, the Church, the Christian Society, has not understood fully, and carried out faithfully our Lord's teaching on this most important of social questions. It follows, therefore, that we are bound to distinguish sharply between Christ's own teaching and the decrees of any ecclesiastical authority, even the precepts of so early and loyal a follower as St. Paul. The thoughts of St. Paul on this subject are never quite free from the prevailing Oriental ideas of his time; and he is further influenced by an almost Essenian asceticism which leads him in one place[1] to

[1] 1 Cor. vii.

speak of marriage as a sort of permitted concubinage, a mere concession to human frailty: 'it is better to marry than to burn.' It is comforting to find that in another, and a later Epistle,[1] he rises to the conception of marriage as a 'great 'mystery'; that is, very much what is meant by a Sacrament in the wider sense of the term. But he never reaches the level of Christ's teaching, and never quite escapes from the notion of a comparison in which Man proves to be the superior.

The essence of Christ's general teaching is to insist on the value of each human soul, as a member of God's family. The result of His teaching on marriage is to raise Woman from the position of a chattel to that of a person, who brings to her union with Man a different but equivalent personality, and thereby to exalt marriage from a merely physical union to one that is truly social, and more than social, spiritual and ideal.

This high doctrine, as we are ready to admit, involves monogamy. The store of service and affection which the husband owes is rightly claimed by one, it cannot be divided or scattered. But it involves also the permanence of the obligation of the marriage tie during life. The limitations of time which apply properly to secular contracts can have no relation to the spiritual

[1] Eph. v. 32.

covenant of marriage. 'He answered and said 'unto them, Have ye not read, that He which 'made them at the beginning made them male 'and female? . . . Wherefore they are no more 'twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath 'joined together, let not man put asunder.'[1]

But in this matter we are not left to inference. In striking contrast with the usual tenour of our Lord's teaching on social questions, which is general, and deals more with character than with specific acts, His pronouncement on this point is absolute and explicit:

'Whosoever shall put away his wife, and 'marry another, committeth adultery against her. 'And if a woman shall put away her husband, and 'be married to another, she committeth adultery.'[2] Divorce followed by re-marriage is a breach of the Seventh Commandment. I am taking it for granted that the true form of our Lord's utterance is found in St. Mark and St. Luke:[3] the prohibition is absolute, without the single excepted case which is given in the text of Matthew, in words which are now generally rejected by critics; and whose interpolation may reasonably be accounted for, like the relaxation of the law of Moses, as a concession to the hardness of men's hearts. It is impossible for me here to go into the arguments for and against the genuineness of this much debated clause; but, to my

[1] Matt. xix. 4. [2] Mark x. 11, 12. [3] Luke xvi. 18.

mind, the question is settled by the protest of the disciples in Matt. xix. 10. 'If the case of the 'man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry,' a protest which could never have been extorted from them by an interpretation of the Jewish Law of Marriage with which they were perfectly familiar.[1] We are bound therefore, I think, as Christians, to accept the prohibition as absolute. Undeniably it sometimes involves hardship for innocent persons; but in that it does not stand alone in our experience of life; and, on the other hand, it does not prohibit the separation in external things of husband and wife, when gradual estrangement of sympathies, or the degeneration of one party to the compact, has made continued union a torment to the other, and a danger to the children; nor does it forbid law and public opinion to extend their protection to the sufferer in an ill-assorted marriage.

3. It is important, however, to remember that, absolute or qualified, the prohibition does not constitute the whole, or the more important side of our Lord's teaching upon the sanctity and obligation of family life. The question of divorce, urgent as it unquestionably is at the present time, may easily be given a prominence which is disproportionate, and actually militates against its sensible and permanent solution. It

[1] On the whole question see the notes on Matt. v. 32 and xix. 9, in Allen's St. Matthew, 'International Critical Commentary.'

is no reasonable policy to attack, directly and separately, what is only a symptom of a deep-seated moral disorder, unless we endeavour at the same time to cure, or better still to prevent the malady itself, the false and trivial conception of marriage and family life. It is the office of the Church to impress upon the mind of the human race such a conception of these sacred things, that people will not dare or desire to deal lightly with them. For us as Christians the motive to this reverence will be found abundantly in the teaching of our Lord. By precept and example He makes family life in the fullest sense a Sacrament; itself, by God's mercy, common to the use of all men,

> 'Not too bright and good
> For human nature's daily food:'

yet, like the Bread and Wine, seen by wiser eyes as a miracle, a miracle of natural growth and fitness for its purpose; and typifying the highest and most life-giving truth that can be known; even that the Eternal and Omnipotent God is a Father; and we, frail and imperfect creatures, men and women, not His playthings or His slaves, but His children. A sincere and reverent contemplation of the words and life of Christ will guard us from the temptation to disparage either the affections or the discipline of the Home.

All that we know of the youth and early manhood of the incarnate Son of God is contained in

a few verses of St. Luke's Gospel. But the reticence of the inspired Evangelist is more significant than the trite fantasies of the uncanonical gospels: for his sparing words, and his silence, alike reveal to us the mystery, that the wisdom, which could already astonish learned age, must still be schooled and trained by the sweet daily ministrations of family intercourse and loving obedience; and that not for nothing did He who was to be the Redeemer of a world, dwell long years pent in the narrow circle of a Galilean village household. And when the time came, and He passed for ever from that humble, well-loved threshold, its memories were still about Him to the end of His earthly life. Even in the mortal agony of the Cross, His thoughts turned to her of whose pangs He was born a man; whose tender love had shielded His weakness, and ministered to His childish wants; to her who, as mothers must, had felt the sword pierce through her own heart also, as she watched Him grow beyond her shielding care, beyond her power of help and understanding.

Everywhere, too, His teaching repeats and emphasises the lesson of His life; not only in the great passages upon the Fatherhood of God; but also in the choice of a little child as a pattern to all who would enter upon the first stages of the Christian life; in the picture of the prodigal remembering his father's house, and returning

thither, not to be repulsed; in the illuminating words which remind us that it is not pattern parents only who can do more for their children than a stranger can—'If ye then being evil know 'how to give good gifts unto your children.' And finally, even in that stern warning, sometimes perversely misinterpreted: 'He that loveth father 'or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me, 'and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me 'is not worthy of Me,' He speaks of the ties of blood and marriage, not as things to be lightly cast away, but as ranking with the very life itself, and yet to be sacrificed, if need be, for Christ's sake; and always to be valued in Him and for Him.

4. Now it is most important that we should realise clearly that this sanctity of marriage and home life, which seems perhaps to us self-evident, is being undermined, and that from several directions.

The libertine demand for freedom from restraint in sexual matters need not delay us long, though indeed it constitutes an appalling menace to the well-being of Society; for it is widely accepted in practice, it is supported or tolerated by a considerable mass of lay opinion in many countries, and actually receives a sort of public sanction from the amazing confusion and laxity of the divorce laws in some of the States of America. But it cannot be met by argument, but by giving to Christian opinion the moral authority of con-

sistent and holy lives. There is, however, another enemy, more subtle and more respectable, whose approaches can only be met by argument founded on accurate and well-marshalled information. This enemy is the modern scientific Socialism, which employs as its weapon the now popular hypothesis of Evolution. Here again we must distinguish between the crudely secularist and really anti-social dogmatism which appears to have its origin in Germany, and the patient reasoning and high moral purpose which are found in the speculations of such writers as Mr. H. G. Wells. It is quite plain that Christianity can have neither part nor lot in an ideal polity which regulates the sexual relation on simply material lines, mating human animals, as a stock-breeder mates his beasts, solely with a view to obtaining certain qualities in the offspring; or, at the other extreme, is ready to dispense with the social value of the strongest of human emotions, allowing them to run to waste in 'the incidental 'and loose relations of individual and temporary 'desire.'[1] It is indeed difficult to believe that such views of the destiny of marriage exercise an influence on the thought and conduct of normal human beings, though there is evidence that they are getting a hold among the working classes in Germany. And it is at all events permissible

[1] F. G. Peabody, 'Jesus Christ and the Social Question,' p. 143.

to hope that their influence will be evanescent; and that their prophets have fallen here also into that disregard of human nature as a factor in the problem, which invalidates so much of their most brilliant and attractive reasoning.

The more thoughtful and reverent school of Socialist thought presents a much more difficult and suggestive problem. In Mr. Wells's tract, 'Socialism and the Family,' there are two points which strike the reader: first, that in the main lines of his argument the writer is preaching naked Christianity; and second, that the principles for which he is contending have already, in great measure, been accepted in practice. Yet, for all that, it remains possible that some of his conclusions are based upon an incomplete induction, and vitiated by a confusion between things which are not *in pari materia.*

When Mr. Wells 'proposes to give a man no 'more property in a woman than a woman has in 'a man,' and so to 'recognise in theory what in 'many classes is already the fact,—the practical 'equality of men and women in a civilised state,' we can go with him. When he tells us that 'the socialist is prepared for an insistence upon 'intelligence and self-restraint quite beyond the 'current practice,' we cannot dispute the justice of the implied criticism. But when he speaks of marriage as 'a relation which every year 'seems more limiting, and (except for its tem-

'porary passional aspect) purposeless,' and declares that 'we live in a world of stupendous 'hypocrisies, a world wherein rakes and rascals 'champion the sacred institution of the family; 'and a network of sexual secrets, vaguely sus- 'pected, disagreeably present, and only half con- 'cealed, pervades every social group one enters,' he seems to be arguing from a partial survey of the facts, and to be hastily taking the clamorous discontented few as representative of the silent mass. Our experience is happily different. In the world as we know it, the 'way of a man 'with a maid' is not an unclean mystery, the butt of prurient curiosity and leering innuendo, but a pleasant wholesome idyll. The solemn, passionate words of the Marriage Service, 'for 'better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sick- 'ness and in health, to love and to cherish, till 'death us do part,' are not felt to be either a hyperbole or a galling chain; nor, as experience proves, do they express an unattainable ideal, but a most blessed commonplace of life.

With regard to the second point mentioned above, the practical acceptance of the socialist principle, it is undeniable in more things, perhaps, than we quite realise. The first Factory Act marks its entry into our legislation; and has been followed by a long series of Acts of Parliament, and Municipal By-laws. And in this particular it is worth while to observe, that the

socialist principle, in so far as it involves renunciation or transfer of parental responsibility, was voluntarily adopted by the rich long before it was enforced upon the poorer classes.[1]

It is now proposed to extend the same principle to more intimate and delicate human relations. The State, already Over Landlord and Over Employer, is to be Over Parent too. This train of reasoning is not without attractions for the logical mind: but a fallacy lurks in the premisses. The history of socialistic enterprise, in its successes and its failures alike, marks out clearly the possibilities and the limitations of its application. A large measure of socialism is necessary and beneficial in all matters which concern the bodily and economic welfare of the citizen: in what we may call the intellectual side of education, and, through it, in the formation of character. But for the primary and essential education of character, for the training of the soul, the family is the ideal unit, not the State. There is no nursery of the Christian spirit which can be depended on, except the Christian home.

5. The standing argument of the advocates of State control is the existence of a large proportion of homes which do not approximate to any such ideal. Too many bad parents, parents who are unfit to have the charge of children, are found in every class: and, in extreme cases, the law

[1] See p. 144.

rightly provides for the removal of children from their control. But it does not follow that it is either wise or just, for their sakes, to rob good parents of their freedom to serve the State in ways which freedom alone makes possible. It is the business of Christianity to form good parents, and convert bad ones. In the words of Dr. Creighton, 'We must make it clear that 'we are not maintaining antiquated ecclesiastical 'prejudices, but are upholding the principles on 'which Family life is founded.' Let us recognise, frankly, that in these matters it is not the day for ecclesiastical authority. In questions of belief and conduct, no one whose support is worth having will 'hear the Church,' unless it can appeal to reason and moral sense.

There is another thing whose day should be past, too, if the honourable estate of Matrimony is to do its just work in the Christian Life, and abide as the corner-stone of Christian society; and that is the ignorance, miscalled innocence, outcome of timidity, and false shame, and indolence, which sends youths and maidens unprepared, to meet the solemn obligations and duties of marriage. The time of innocence for our young people is ended, by a flood of literature dealing grossly or seductively with the carnal side of the sexual relation; which, in the conditions of modern life, the most guarded can hardly escape. Will not their souls be required

at our hands, if we fail to put before them the facts in their true setting; if we deny them the counsels of wisdom and self-control, while we allow them to steep their minds in the pictured allurements of sense, the records of lawless passion, the stupid or wilful misrepresentation of the deeper and more lasting elements in marriage.

It is surely the duty of the Church to speak out on these subjects with no uncertain voice; and in its public and private teaching, and in the lives of its professed followers, to keep ever before itself, and before the world, an ideal of Christian marriage, which will attract by its beauty, and convince by its innate reasonableness.

MORAL PROBLEMS OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE[1]

'It is no small merit to have understood that 'political economy is as much an ethical as a 'material science, in an age when philanthropists 'and economists agree in condemning each other's 'efforts, and when both seem to have forgotten 'that the same holy doctrine which teaches the 'precept of charity, supplies the basis of economical 'science by inculcating alike the duties of benevo- 'lence to the rich, and of industrious independence 'to the poor: for "the poor we have always with 'us," but "if any man will not work neither let 'him eat."'

This sane and illuminating judgment, which offers so appropriate a text for a discussion on the Moral problems of Industry and Commerce, was written by the late Lord Acton, in the year 1861. The principle which it enunciates remains to-day unquestionable by Christians—and so far unrealised; but we may gladly admit that the conditions which it describes have in one respect changed for the better in forty-seven years. There has been a gradual and tentative *rapprochement*

[1] Manchester Church Congress (1908).

between the economists and the philanthropists. It is recognised, in theory at least, that the uncontrolled operation of economic laws in the Modern State produces results which are intolerable to the educated conscience, physically and morally injurious to individuals, and dangerous to the social order: and, on the other hand, that the benevolent activities of the philanthropist who disregards economic laws are not only futile but pernicious. The solution, if there is a solution, must be arrived at not by the elimination of either factor, nor by the wasteful expenditure of energy in violent action and reaction, but by the intelligent co-ordination of material and ideal motives of action, since both of them are indispensable to success, and each alike destructive, if the attempt is made to exclude it. Such a recognition of mutual dependence is a great advance upon the uncompromising hostility criticised by Lord Acton. It cannot, however, be said that it is universally accepted as an article of faith by practical business men. It remains rather in the intermediate state of a pious opinion, which may be repeated with unction, but certainly not allowed to interfere with solid interests and really important things like dividends. This is of course not universally true: there are employers who have thought it worth while to regard and treat their workers not merely as power-units but as human beings, with the most encouraging results. But I am afraid it is

generally true: and it suggests that there are a good many people to whom the problem is not immediately interesting; that the race of Alberic is not extinct—Alberic the loveless possessor and misuser of the Rhine Gold as interpreted by Mr. G. B. Shaw. 'In his character of sworn pluto-'crat he is still at work among us wielding the 'power of the gold. For his gain, hordes of his 'fellow-creatures are condemned to slave miser-'ably, overground and underground, lashed to 'their work by the invisible whip of starvation. 'They never see him, any more than the victims 'of our "dangerous trades" ever see the share-'holders whose power is nevertheless everywhere, 'driving them to destruction. The very wealth 'which they create with their labour becomes an 'additional force to impoverish them; for as fast 'as they make it, it slips from their hands into the 'hands of their master, and makes him mightier 'than ever. You can see the process for yourself 'in every civilised country to-day, where millions 'of people toil in want and distress to heap up 'more wealth for our Alberics, laying up nothing 'for themselves, except sometimes horrible and 'agonising disease and the certainty of premature 'death. All this part of the story is frightfully 'real, frightfully present, frightfully modern; and 'its effects on our social life are so ghastly and 'ruinous that we no longer know enough of happi-'ness to be discomposed by it. It is only the

'poet, with his vision of what life might be, to 'whom these things are unendurable. If we were 'a race of poets we should make an end of them, 'before the end of this century. Being a race 'of moral dwarfs instead, we think them highly 'respectable, comfortable and proper, and allow 'them to breed and multiply their evil in all 'directions. If there were no higher power in 'the world to work against Alberic, the end of it 'would be utter destruction. Such a force there 'is, however, and it is called Godhead.'

There is, I know, a tendency, partly justified, not to take Mr. Shaw quite seriously; to discount his statements, and disregard his conclusions, as wilfully paradoxical. He himself complains of it in his prefaces. But there is plenty of independent evidence that *this* passage is true in substance and fact: true in its menace to the existing order: true also in its implied promise, if for 'poet' we read 'Christian.'

This then is the Moral difficulty in the way of a sound settlement,—the existence of a large number of persons who, in their business as distinguished from their personal conduct, have still to be converted to the elementary Gospel of Humanity.

This Moral difficulty is reinforced, and, in its more innocent manifestations, caused by what I may call Mechanical difficulties resulting from the extraordinary complication of interests in-

volved in the commercial and industrial enterprises of the present day.

The vast and highly organised systems of industry which we are accustomed, justly or not, to associate with American methods, display in a marked degree some of the virtues of genuine co-operation. Economy in administration and the power of lavish expenditure on the best and newest means of production give them a legitimate advantage over smaller competitors. But on the other hand, apart from the inherent evils of monopoly, the very conditions of their success make any human relations between employer and employed difficult, if not impossible, and lead almost inevitably to the harsh and arbitrary treatment of servants who can be replaced at once if they refuse to accept terms which are in fact oppressive. It is unfortunately possible for a great American Trust to 'retrench' one-third of the clerks in its London office, and compel the survivors to do the whole work by means of longer hours, without increasing their salaries.

Again, the multiplication of joint-stock enterprises adds to the problem a fresh complexity by the infinite subdivision of ownership, which weakens the sense of personal responsibility, and reduces to a minimum the power of interference even where this responsibility is most keenly felt. What, for instance, is the duty of an ardent temperance reformer who becomes possessed

by inheritance of a small parcel of distillery shares?

The less enlightened type of investor provides an admirable field for the exercise of ethical qualities not always to be found in professional financiers, some of whom regard their clients as existing for quite different purposes—

> 'Of other care they little reckoning make
> Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast.'

It may be admitted that the investor is sometimes greedy and credulous. If he were invariably clear-sighted and self-controlled, he would need less protection; but he cannot on that account be summarily dismissed to take his chance; although he, or I should perhaps say she, cannot always be justifiably pleaded as an argument in support of alleged vested interests.

And while we ask consideration for the small shareholder, we must say a word too for that very unpopular person the capitalist on a larger scale, even for the millionaire. There are some extreme people who would like to treat him as a Wolf's head and out of law. We may with some show of reason regard him as an undesirable phenomenon which could not exist in our Ideal State. Meanwhile we must acknowledge that he is at worst a necessary evil, and that in fact he is not always an Alberic, even in his business relations. A sane and honourable capitalist has it in

his power to produce, and actually does produce, more solid happiness by the employment he gives, than fifty charitable societies with the best administered 'relief.' It is when the millionaire loses his head, imagines that he is an earthly Providence, and doubles the rôles of exploiter and pauperiser, that he becomes an intolerable nuisance.

I have spoken so far of the various classes who are concerned directly or indirectly in Production: taken all together they form a considerable fraction of the community. But over against this large fraction stands the whole community, including themselves, in the character of Consumer, deeply and vitally interested in the efficiency and integrity of Trade and Commerce. There is not time, nor is it necessary, to dwell upon the evils of inferior quality in goods and work resulting from cut-throat competition, and of exorbitant prices resulting from monopoly: but there is one aspect of the relation between producer and consumer which must be noticed here, and that is the direct bearing of the poverty of consumers upon the margin of profit, and so upon wages. The underpaid worker, under bitter constraint, forces down the price of the scanty necessaries of life, till the producer of them is brought in turn to a starvation wage; and there seems to be no escape from the vicious circle.

Such are a few of the more obvious difficulties

which surround the problem we are considering; the problem of unravelling a tangle of crossing and conflicting interests, and securing due justice and consideration for all the classes concerned, the consumer, the worker, and the capitalist, great or small. The difficulties are sufficient to give pause to the most confident reformer; to banish hasty methods and extravagant hopes; and to impose the necessity of a cautious advance, guided by trained intelligence and a large tolerance for human imperfection. But on the other hand they must not be used as an excuse for contented inaction, nor allowed to blind Christians to the universal obligation and applicability of those great moral principles of their Religion, which are summed up by the Law in the commandment, 'Thou shalt not steal,' and by the Gospel in the saying, 'Thou shalt love 'thy neighbour as thyself.' Whatever is obscure, it is lamentably clear that the conditions on which the wealth of nations and of individuals are based do not everywhere conform to these principles, that they are sometimes cruel and inequitable. There are many problems of Commerce and Industry in which an attitude of pyrrhonistic impartiality is not open to any who calls himself Christian. It is not right that human beings should be underfed, ill-clad, and foully housed while their labour produces an ample margin of profit for the luxury of others. It is not right

that an inhuman parsimony should refuse to the workers in dangerous trades every safeguard that can reasonably be devised; or that a poisonous process should be chosen or retained in preference to a safe one, on grounds of economy. It is not right that in some places work-girls and shop-girls should be expected, almost encouraged to eke out an insufficient wage *quæstu corporis*, and to look forward to an escape from the house of bondage by 'being good to some man who 'can afford to be good to them.' And it is not enough to enunciate obvious propositions like these, even with fervour. The Church must show a working belief in them which will not be terrorised by wealth and influence, or beguiled by pleas of custom and expediency. The practical manifestation of such a belief constitutes the only claim to interfere effectively in the moral problems of Industry and Commerce, or, indeed, in any moral problems whatever. Now the Church has not always been credited with a rigorous moral judgment where the interests of the comfortable classes were concerned, or a passionate enthusiasm for the reform of abuses. But it is that judgment, that enthusiasm which are crucially necessary just now. The working classes are awakening to a sense of their rights. If we are to preach to them unselfishness in the day of their power, and persuade them that they have duties as well as rights, we must go to them

with clean hands; not with hands which receive indirectly a part of the unrighteous spoil, nor with that easy love for our neighbour which deplores his sufferings without making any serious attempt to remedy them.

Nevertheless a due appreciation of the difficulties involved will retain its cautionary value even for the sincere and single-minded. It will warn them of the extreme danger of hasty conclusions and inconsiderate action. It will compel them sometimes to ask the question, 'Who 'is my neighbour?' with a more sincere perplexity than the lawyer's in the Gospel. And in matters so complicated and technical as modern business relations it is in most cases the part of the Christian layman with expert knowledge to answer that question. The Church, as such, is concerned with the morality of Industry and Commerce, not with their casuistry; it is something more than a Protestant prejudice which has given the word casuistry its unfortunate connotation. And it will commonly be well advised to observe the distinction, and abstain from definite pronouncements on the more technical details of social and economic reform: not because details are unimportant, but because the primary duty of a Church is the uncompromising maintenance of principle; and if this is really secured, details may safely be left to adjust themselves. The right attitude of the Church to these questions is surely deter-

mined by the example of its Founder. When a man asked Him to decide a particular case of the distribution of wealth, He refused. 'One of the 'company said unto Him, Master, speak to my 'brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. 'And he said unto him, Man, who made Me a 'judge or a divider over you? And he said unto 'them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: 'for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance 'of the things which he possesseth.'[1]

I hope I have made it clear that I do not advocate a return to the chimeras of a vague and obscurantist philanthropy, which, rejecting expert knowledge of the conditions in which it must work, attempts the hopeless task of alleviating the symptoms of a disorder which is not reduced, but rather aggravated, by such treatment. I thank God that before now great Churchmen have been chosen as arbitrators in trade disputes, and by the power of wisdom and holiness have been able to compose the strife of warring interests. I acknowledge that it is right and necessary that clergymen as well as laymen should devote themselves to the scientific study of economic problems from a Christian standpoint. I reject uncompromisingly the idea that a man who takes Holy Orders renounces thereby his rights and duties as a citizen. Yet his Orders, if they have any meaning, impose upon him a

[1] Luke xii. 13–15.

positive limitation. The first concern of God's minister is not with the passing phenomena of Society and Politics, but with the springs of action which lie deep in the soul of man. Material welfare is chiefly valuable for him as a condition of moral and spiritual welfare, and may itself be an evil if it is injurious to them. This estimate of values is at least as old as the Sermon on the Mount, but to the practical consensus of mankind it remains a startling paradox; and a clergyman will need all his courage and wisdom for the delicate achievement of understanding and teaching the vital importance of the right use of money, without exaggerating its intrinsic importance. There lies the danger; our whole trouble is caused by the delusion that money is the one thing solidly worth having; and it cannot be cured by ingenious variations on that theme. In an age when the practical belief in material well-being as the supreme good has taken such a hold that it needs a perpetual conscious effort to escape its influence, it is our first duty to exalt and cherish the spiritual and mystical elements of man's nature.

The equitable distribution of wealth is the outward visible sign of the sacrament of social righteousness; but it is not the whole sacrament, nor the most important part of it; and any theory of economic reform which is content to accept it as the whole, and is based, tacitly or frankly, on

the postulate of selfishness, cannot offer a permanent solution. The system which embodies it will crumble before the attacks of a stronger selfishness, better equipped with brute force or intelligence. It is our business to convince mankind that selfishness is not a safe motive, and that the best devised machinery actuated by it will, despite all precautions, be found to

> 'turn an easy wheel
> Which sets sharp racks at work to pinch and peel.'

It will be a long business; and it is not our only business. We cannot allow manifest wrong to go on meanwhile lest we be justly accused of moralising *in vacuo* while Rome is burning. The system which we have allowed to grow up has produced an abundant crop of surface evils which can be dealt with directly by legislation, by the action of local authorities, by public opinion, by exposure, by protest, by example; and we cannot afford to dispense with any lawful weapons and alliances to meet the emergent needs of to-day. But it is not in the dust of conflict that the ultimate issues of war are decided. The essential and characteristic office of the Church is to build up the inner life of the laity: in this case, of the men whose actual experience and trained intellect give them the power, if they have the will, to answer these hard questions rightly for us; to foster in them a conscience which will not toler-

ate chicanery or oppression in themselves or in others; a humanity which will feel the suffering of fellow-creatures as if it were their own; and the fear of that God who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.

LAW AND JUSTICE[1]

'But I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil.'—MATT. v. 39.

IT is hardly necessary to recite the whole of the well-known passage from the Sermon on the Mount, in order to point the striking contrast which appears to exist between the occasion of our gathering in this church and the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth: a contrast so poignant as to demand at all times the earnest consideration of Christian men; and especially in our own time, when all systems of belief and conduct are under review, and the virtue of social institutions, which had for our forefathers the force and stability of natural laws, is treated as an open question.

The history of the human mind in the nineteenth century is largely a record of two opposing streams of tendency, whose course is marked, as one or other was for the time the stronger, by legislation, or by more deep-lying changes of outlook and activity; whose clash and stir is a chief cause, on the political and social side at least, of the spread of unrest and scepticism. The conflict is, indeed, the old one between

[1] Assize Sermon, St. Mary's, Oxford, June 14, 1904.

Authority and Liberty, but under new forms and involving new problems.

On the one side we see the vigorous revival of the spirit of nationality, which had its impulse in the Napoleonic wars, when France, by a vain attempt to establish a new dominion on the ruins of the Holy Roman Empire, aroused the slumbering patriotism of Europe. This sentiment, illogical as it may be, and often founded on no real historical or racial unity, is a new and far-reaching force in politics, which we find admirable or inconvenient in proportion to the remoteness of the insurgent nationality from our own sphere of government.

And in the train of Nationalism appears, as its inevitable corollary, a notable increase in the personal power of the Sovereign. The concrete embodiment of the national idea in the chief magistrate has an irresistible appeal for the patriotic mind: and accordingly, at the very time when it is a commonplace of the text-books that 'the King reigns but does not govern'; the personality of the monarch has suddenly come to be of overwhelming importance. The Crown is once more a factor to be reckoned with in politics: it has found, in the temporary paralysis of parliamentary institutions, an opportunity of asserting its prerogative: or shall we say it has accepted the urgent duty of exercising the powers committed to it on behalf of the nation. It is not

to my purpose to discuss the effect which this practical revival of the ideas of nationality and monarchy will have upon the course of history; to inquire if they are the natural outcome of the growth of Democracy, or reactionary forces destined to come into violent collision with it sooner or later. I am concerned only with the rising demands which the nation and the prince make on individual liberty: for in this point they are at one in result, though not in purpose or method, with their great enemy Socialism.

We have already travelled far in some things from the notions of the great economist whose centenary was celebrated ten days ago. The attitude of *laissez faire* was condemned in principle by the first of the Factory Acts: and interference with freedom of contract, limitation of output and of hours of labour, a standard wage, not merely dependent on the law of supply and demand, these have long been ideas familiar, if not acceptable, to us all. And of late it is more and more questioned, whether the interference of the State be not desirable in relations of life which have hitherto been regarded as properly lying between man and man, or between a man and his conscience. And here, too, we have gone far upon the path of carrying out the principle before we began to discuss it as such. The Socialist, ostensibly hostile to absolute power, and to what he calls arbitrary divisions of the

human brotherhood, yet enforces unsparingly the paramount claim of the State to guide, restrain, and, if necessary, to sacrifice the individual.

But on the other side, in opposition to these unifying and organising tendencies, the protest of the individual has been incessant and vigorous. We have seen that it is a difficult task to educate Englishmen into acquiescence, when it is proposed to limit the freedom of external trade. We have seen a stubborn if intemperate resistance to an impost which was regarded as unjust. We may not consider that resistance justified by the facts, but it would be unwise to ridicule or disregard it. But we need not go far to seek more striking and romantic instances of the revolt of the individual against the system. Militant anarchy goes its way, striking impartially at every head of a State, be it despot, constitutional king, or the elected president of a bourgeois republic: without mercy, without passion; amenable to no sanction which outraged civilisation can devise; a standing menace to the established order. And meanwhile, less appalling but more persuasive, and therefore in the end more dangerous, Tolstoi lays aside rank and wealth to live the life of a peasant, and thereby to proclaim to all men the Gospel as he has learned it.

'But I say unto you, Resist not him that is 'evil. But whosoever smiteth thee on the right 'cheek, turn to him the other also: and if any

'man would go to law with thee and take away 'thy coat, let him have thy cloke also.'

What answer are we to make in the face of this profound conviction, issuing not in frantic violence, but in calm self-approval and self-sacrifice? Is the teaching of the New Testament summed up in these few lines? God is not a God of confusion. Is this the message which the Incarnate Word of God came on earth to deliver, that human society must renounce the right and duty to coerce the evil-doer, and to maintain for the well-doer, by force if necessary, the liberty to dwell in peace and security? Surely not.

Dr. Gore has an illuminating passage in his Commentary on this text. He points out that our Lord's teaching is proverbial in form.

'A proverb,' he says, 'embodies a principle 'of common but not universal application in an 'absolute and extreme form. Another proverb 'may embody another principle in a similar form. 'And thus expressed they may easily appear con-'tradictory, and both alike impracticable, if taken 'literally, because all the qualifying circumstances 'are left out. In this place our Lord, in emphasis-'ing one principle, expresses it as an absolute 'direction in an extreme instance: "If a man will 'take thy coat, let him have thy cloke also." In 'emphasising another principle he expresses it in 'a similar form: "If thy brother trespass against

'thee," are you simply to take no notice of it? 'No, "Go and tell him his fault, between thee 'and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast gained 'thy brother: but if he hear thee not, take with 'thee one or two more, that at the mouth of two 'witnesses or three, every word may be estab-'lished. And if he refuse to hear them, tell it 'unto the Church: and if he refuse to hear the 'Church also, let him be unto thee as a Gentile, 'and a publican."

'Here it is obvious that our Lord is enjoining, 'not an extreme measure of personal meekness, 'but an extreme insistence on social justice. We 'observe therefore two opposite duties. There is 'the clear duty, so far as mere personal feeling 'goes, of simple self-effacement. Only then, when 'we have got our own wills thoroughly subordi-'nated to God's will, when all the wild instinct 'of revenge is subdued, are we in a position to 'consider the other duty, and ask ourselves what 'the maintenance of the moral order of Society 'may require of us.'[1]

It is abundantly clear from the passage in the eighteenth chapter of St. Matthew quoted above, that our Lord contemplated the foundation of a Christian Society with order and discipline, as the outward and visible form, of the Kingdom of God within the heart: and that he contem-

[1] Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, 1900 edit., pp. 85 foll.

plated also the possibility of revolt and coercion, 'for that He knew all men: and needed not 'that any one should bear witness concerning man, 'for He Himself knew what was in man.' We may be content, therefore, upon a study, not of particular texts but of the Gospels as a whole, to suppose that St. Paul was not entirely deceived as to the social teaching of his Master, and to accept his dictum that the powers that be are ordained of God; to regard the civil and criminal jurisdiction of the Crown as a part of His ordinance. And indeed it has been so of old with us English folk. For us, justice is the first attribute of the royal office, the first quality of the royal nature. We have ever been ready to forgive much else in the kings who could and would sternly check the law-breaker; but no graces or virtues could commend a king who suffered wrong to go unpunished. As England became one, 'as soon as there was any central govern-'ment, it followed as a matter of course that the 'common king should take to himself the place 'of chief judge throughout his dominions. Of all 'the kings who are held in honour, Alfred, Edgar, 'Cnut, we find it set down among their merits 'that they either went about doing justice in their 'own persons, or else sent forth judges to do 'justice in their names.' And later when the Norman had come into the land and our forefathers learned by bitter experience the miseries

of unlaw from the wicked Rufus, and weak, good-natured Stephen, they learned, too, to reverence more than ever the strong hand though it were merciless, and to extol above all princes the doer of justice.

'In the eyes of men of his own time,' says Freeman, 'both of his own subjects and of 'strangers, Henry I. seemed the most fortunate 'and most powerful of princes. In the eyes of his 'own subjects he bore the higher title of the Lion 'of Justice. . . . It is not merely his flatterers who 'describe him as the almost perfect model of a 'king: it is from men whose moral sense was not 'darkened, who neither hide his crimes nor gloss 'over his vices . . . that we learn what the merits 'of Henry as a ruler really were. . . . His hand 'was heavy on all disturbers of the public peace, 'great and small, French and English. From his 'justice no claim of race or rank could deliver the 'offender . . . and unlike his brother, Henry was 'ready to redress the wrongs done by his own 'officers and followers, at any rate when they took 'the form of open breaches of the law. He was 'the man whom the national Chronicler, after 'uttering not a few complaints in detail, could 'send out of the world with the noblest of pane-'gyrics, "Good man he was, and mickle awe was 'of him. Durst no man misdo with other on his 'time, peace he made for man and deer."'

It is a noble judgment, and does credit to its

writer and to the English character, as well as to the prince whom it commemorates. The fine image of the lion, watchful and strong, terrible in wrath, ready to strike once and strike no more, most aptly touches the virtues and defects of the man and of the system. For, then and since, English justice has not always been free from quite other qualities of the king of beasts, the heady pride, the insensate rage, the cat-like cruelty. We may still remember with shame the treatment meted out to political offenders in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when a verdict of acquittal was counted a defeat for the Government, which they commonly took good care to avoid, and the trial was only a formal preliminary to the gallows or the block. But we are bound to remember as well, that their tampering with the administration of justice was one of the most disastrous of the errors which led to the fall of the House of Stuart, and that since 1688 the employment of legal forms for purposes of faction has become as extinct among us as those other methods by which private suitors did not hesitate to secure a verdict in a less scrupulous age than ours. But if under the Protestant Succession justice grew rapidly uncorrupt, it does not seem always to have been blest with the virtues of discrimination and mercy in an equal measure. The picture we can collect from the writings of contemporary authors presents to us

a strange figure, blindfolded in very truth, the drawn sword ever dripping with the blood of unnumbered victims, and the useless balance dealing out the same measure and weight to the murderer and the petty thief, to the hardened ruffian and the starving child. They have much to say, too, on the civil side, of the law's delays, of plain right strangled in technicalities, of lives worn out in the slow torment of unending litigation. Doubtless the portrait is overcharged; we must not take romance and satire for history; but the official list of a gaol-delivery at the beginning of the last century is grim reading.

Still, true or false, exaggerated or no, these horrors are of the past. We belong to an age which values itself, not unjustly, for humanity. The Newgate Monday morning, of fact or fiction, with its dozen or twenty unfortunates to be turned off, and its brutalised mob of spectators devoid alike of terror or pity, has passed for ever into the limbo of the rack, the hurdle, and the quartering-block. It may be that our sensibility is as much the child of weak nerves as of moral enlightenment, that we shrink as much from the infliction of salutary as of useless pain. But we have learned at least to admit the claims of the criminal and the prisoner; we have learned that the State has a duty to its erring children which is not fulfilled by ridding them out of the way as expeditiously as possible: for we have begun to

confess that it is our fault collectively that the criminal is there at all. And as the result of this wholesome feeling of responsibility there have arisen agencies public and private for the prevention of crime, the care of first offenders, and the reformation of those who have fallen ; and it is well. But the further we advance in this path, the more clearly do we see that the end is far off, and that we have little reason for self-satisfaction and self-approval.

'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the 'Lord.' And when an individual or a society takes upon itself to exercise a divine prerogative, however sincere be the purpose, however urgent the necessity, there is still need of untiring watchfulness that the high task be performed humbly, honestly, wisely.

Humbly, in the consciousness that the discipline we enforce is indeed a confession of the pravity of our common human nature, not the vindication of our moral superiority to the unhappy detected sinner. Honestly, with the resolve that the aim shall be single, uncorrupted by interest or passion, by fear or favour, not diverted a hair's breadth by the subtler influences of vanity and jealousy which may dim the keenest eyes upon the true issue. And wisely, for if the aim be one, the methods are infinitely difficult and complicated : at every point there seems to be a conflict of rights and interests. It is not

the conflict between the interests of the law-breaker and the State that I am contemplating, for the interests of the prisoner at the bar and the society which punishes him are in fact one; that the unhappy and wasteful citizen be converted into a prosperous and productive citizen. The real difficulty is to devise a system which shall serve its double purpose of deterring and reforming: and then so to modify it, to make it so elastic that it shall be the best for deterring or reforming the individual criminal in hand. The public has a perfect right to ask that it shall be permanently protected from the Ishmaels, whose chosen and single industry is crime, outlaws of their own deliberate purpose: and they, morally imbecile, have the same right to be put under restraint and protected from themselves as the mentally insane; yet we are told on high authority that, under the present system, these men, a small but active and intelligent band, well known to the police, remain at large for years, in the exercise of their profession; and when their luck fails them, they are imprisoned only to be released after a period shortened by good conduct, and renew their war on civilisation with refreshed faculties and whetted appetites. On the other hand, what we may call the accidental criminal, whose offence has no necessary connection with his life and character, has also his right to expiate his fault wholly by his allotted

sentence, and to be protected and encouraged in honest industry when he comes out of prison.

In the face of such problems as these it is no wonder that zeal should have sometimes outrun discretion, and that extreme or eccentric changes have been advocated in the direction alternately of severity and mercy. But it is where the evil is most intolerable and most puzzling, that the temptation to rash and one-sided action is most dangerous, the need of wisdom and patience is greatest. Though our system of punishment has ceased to be ferocious, that is no gain either for State or convicts if it is to become doctrinaire. And it must always be remembered that experiments in penology cannot be conducted *in vacuo*. The theorist is forced to make, upon the immortal souls of his fellow-creatures, experiments which may be ten times more cruel, and, in the case of failure, must be a hundred times more disastrous, than the experiments which doctors are sometimes accused, I venture to say falsely accused, of making on the bodies of hospital patients.

It is true, within limits, that science cannot advance without experiment. But with how great humility, honesty, wisdom, should those experiments be guarded, in which the subjects are men and women, of whom it was once said: 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least 'of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.'

POLITICS[1]

'Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God, and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment. For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldst thou have no fear of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same: for he is a minister of God to thee for good.'—ROM. xiii. 1–4.

THE question of the right attitude of the Christian as such to the secular power, a question inevitably stirred from its long repose by the spiritual upheavals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, has been thrust roughly and vividly into prominence by the action of the French Government in these last months. We in this country are not, it is true, confronted by it, at present, in this extreme form: nevertheless it is this question and the conflicting answers given to it which underlie and embitter the differences which paralyse us, not only in the obvious case of the Education Controversy, but in the Social and Economic problems which force their riddle upon unwilling citizens, and, like the Theban Sphinx, daily devour till it be answered rightly. Men are asking themselves and each

[1] St. Mary's, Oxford, January 21, 1906.

other whether the precepts of the Gospel can be obeyed in the swift relentless intercourse of politics and business, or if the Christian, like just Lot, must withdraw himself and dwell apart in his little city, intent chiefly on the saving of his own soul; or again, and this is too often the practical answer, though it be reluctantly admitted or passionately denied, if Religion is well enough in the Church, in the chamber, at the death-bed but quite out of place in a bustling world where success depends on recognising selfishness as the only motive, and meeting it with its own weapons.

The earliest stratum of Christian teaching seems to me to give its answer in no uncertain tones. The verses I have taken for my text, and parallel passages in other Pauline Epistles and in the First Epistle of St. Peter, unanimously preach submission; and not submission only, but loyal obedience, and grateful acceptance of the law as it stood; an acceptance, notably in the case of slavery, carried further than the public conscience of to-day would allow. We may read in this spirit of loyalty something of the relief and thankfulness which all Roman provincials felt when they passed from the capricious tyranny of the Senate under the strong hand of the Emperors: but there is more than that; there is the profound and enlightened tolerance born of Faith, which sees the good in things imperfect, and in that good the Hand of God, thus giving to all history,

natural and human, the unity which Science is only now beginning to discover in it.

And even if it could be maintained that the words of St. Paul and St. Peter counsel only cold submission to a social order which is not worth reforming because it is soon to pass away for ever: the like cannot be said of the teaching of the Baptist as recorded by St. Luke, which must at least represent an early and accepted tradition. The Soldier and the Publican, athirst for the Repentance which is to admit them to the Kingdom, are not bidden to relinquish their questionable trades, but to carry into them the Spirit of Christ. The Power of the Purse, the Power of the Sword, are not yet stamped as unclean in themselves. Doubtless they are *ἀδιάφορα*, a means not an end; but the moral is, not that they are despicable or accursed, but that they must be diligently used to make for righteousness.

If I have dwelt strongly on this aspect of the primitive Church's relations with the world, it is because the change which followed was rapid and complete, and its effects upon thought and conduct have not wholly died out even to the present day. It is reasonable, I suppose, to interpret the Evil Power of the Apocalypse as meaning Imperial Rome. So even before we pass from the Canon of the New Testament we find the attitude of cheerful obedience altered to desperate antagonism, with the certainty of present suffering

lightened only by the hope of ultimate victory—I had almost said revenge.

The power ordained of God, which the Christian man may not lightly withstand, the Ministers of God to him for good, is quite vanished and forgotten. In its place by a poignant contrast now stands the Mystical Woman arrayed in 'purple 'and scarlet colour . . . having a golden cup in 'her hand full of abominations . . . drunken with 'the blood of the saints.' Babylon the Great at whose fall, proclaimed by the strong voice of the glorious angel, the kings of the earth 'shall bewail 'her, and lament for her, when they shall see the 'smoke of her burning; standing afar off for the 'fear of her torment, and saying, Alas, alas! that 'great city Babylon, that mighty city, for in one 'hour is thy judgment come.' But the heaven, and the holy apostles and prophets are bidden to rejoice over her, because God has avenged them upon her.

What depth of tragic experience lies between those two conceptions of the State.

I do not pretend that the lyric fury of the Apocalypse ever represented the mind of any considerable proportion of Christians. Their attitude towards the laws and the magistrates was still one of submission: but they no longer felt that they were under a beneficent rule which would impartially punish evil, and reward good as they understood it: they were face to face

now with a hostile and relentless power always suspicious, and ready at any moment to become destructive. They were willing to obey in all that did not touch the Faith: but every avenue of civic and even of social activity was closed to them by the figure of Divus Cæsar. The recognition of a grateful world had grown to a worship which Christians could not share, and not sharing it they were outlaws holding their very lives at the mercy of an informer. There were long periods of rest, almost of security, when the laws were not enforced, and persecution relaxed: but the Christian writings of the time are instinct with the spirit of antagonism; and if the *Acta Sanctorum* prove that there were many Christians serving in the Roman legions before Constantine, they show us, too, the ever present danger of a conflict between Faith and Discipline, and the view that was taken of a man's duty in such a collision. The Christian was a man apart: he could not conform to what seemed quite simple and innocent usages of the world about him, and it was this that made the unlettered heathen hate the Church, not the monstrous crimes lightly attributed to Christians as an excuse for persecution. It was this that even under the wisest and most humane Emperors brought the heavy hand of the Government upon the obstinate holders of a forbidden creed. The Christian could not yield homage to the deity of Cæsar. The Roman

State could not tolerate within itself that most powerful of solvents—a growing body of citizens, of blameless life and inoffensive manners, who ignored its sanctions and rejected its ideals. The Christians were to the Empire what Socrates was to Athens; the crime of both was that, in a deeper sense perhaps than Rome or Athens knew, they would not worship the gods whom the State worshipped. The impartial verdict of history will justify alike the persecutor and the persecuted. But those inevitable years of dull or passionate revolt have left their mark upon Christian thought. We are familiar with the influence in the Church of the Manichean doctrine which deprives God of the physical half of His Creation; but here is a subtler dualism that allots to the kingdom of Ahriman the whole region of civic duty and privilege.

But for the moment the age of conflict passed away, to be succeeded by a not less perilous era of union, even of identity, between Church and State; when orthodoxy was one with loyalty, heresy with treason, and at last the words Roman and Christian came to be synonymous.

It does not fall within my scope to trace the steady growth of the Papal power: the stages by which the See of Rome not unworthily attained that supremacy which has so profoundly influenced the history of mankind. It was the one institution visibly continuous among the changes

which swept over Italy. It survived the collapse of the civil and military powers of the Western Empire, and the horrors of invasion; and under the shame of a foreign dominion it remained to the Roman the one symbol of the ancient greatness of the Eternal City. And if the Roman bishops were the protectors of the oppressed, they made themselves also the friends of the conquerors. The barbarian monarchs were not slow to acknowledge the claims of learning, courage, and piety, and while they reverenced the virtues of the clergy, willingly employed in government and diplomacy accomplishments of which their own rough vassals were destitute. So the Roman Church went its way, now bowing to the storm, now under able and vigorous chiefs making rapid advances in authority and dignity; and never relinquishing what it had once gained. The history of the Imperial Power is less noble and less prosperous. We see it sinking rapidly, through impotence and dishonour, to its seeming extinction in 476, then flitting ghostlike through the minds of men in the fiction of Italy's allegiance to the far-off Byzantine, till it revived in bodily form in the person of Charles the Great.

One would willingly dwell awhile on the scene in the old basilica of St. Peter at Rome on Christmas Day 800, when the Great Frankish Patrician was crowned by God's Vicar as Imperator and Augustus. But we must pass on. To us it is

interesting as the inauguration, the solemn hallowing of the most remarkable political conception the world has ever known.

It is easy to demonstrate that the Holy Roman Empire was a dream and only a dream; that it was invalidated in theory by the continued existence of a rival Empire at Constantinople; and that the time of its effectual working in practice is measured not by centuries, but by years or even months. We may admit so much: we may admit more—that the great ideal was doomed to failure, not only because Popes were ambitious and Emperors feeble or encroaching, but by causes which lie deep in the constitution of human nature. But in another aspect, in its influence on the thoughts and actions of men, it is a most real and important fact, the key to the history of Western Europe from the eighth century to the fourteenth.

The point is that for centuries even the most enlightened of men really believed that it was right, that it was the Will of God that there should be an universal Christian monarchy. The Roman Empire and the Catholic Church are two aspects of one society: a society ordained by the Divine Will to extend itself over the whole world. Of this society Rome is marked by Divine decree as the predestined capital.

The Emperor, duly elected and hallowed as the lawful successor of Augustus, is its temporal head:

its spiritual head the Pope, duly elected and hallowed as the lawful successor of the Prince of the Apostles. To these two heads, each in his own sphere, every Christian man owes allegiance, and on the other hand every Christian man is qualified to become, if he be found fit, either Pope or Emperor.

So men believed for centuries, with a belief that actually influenced their lives, and had to be taken into account by all who desired to govern or lead them, and in this sense the Holy Roman Empire was for its time, and that no short time, a most real and dominant fact. It gave its answer undoubtingly to the question which we are asking, the answer that the State and the Church are two sides of the same organised body, that the Christian and none other is the citizen, and that he may serve God by taking any place in either hierarchy, spiritual or temporal.

But on the other side, what we may call in the narrower sense the historical side, we know that the idea never found realisation, it remained a noble dream, and in practice was a failure almost from the first. It asked too much of human nature, for it asked self-renunciation as the concomitant and condition of absolute power; and, harder yet, it asked concord and mutual forbearance from two equal sovereigns ruling the same body of subjects, their several jurisdictions overlapping and conflicting at every point. The

result was not doubtful. The two swords were ever clashing. The two vicegerents of God, instead of working together in harmony, were jealous rivals; and the names borne by their partisans in Italy have passed into a proverb for ruthless and unforgetting faction. It was a strife fatal to both combatants, to neither could it bring glory or profit.

The Papacy still stands, crippled by the lost allegiance of half a world, and tainted with the unrenounced ambition for temporal power, yet receiving new strength, even against its will, in proportion as it is forced back into its proper sphere of spiritual jurisdiction.

The Empire, after a brief, unprosperous renascence in the days of another Charles, the last who grasped its significance and laboured to vindicate its true claims, fell to the low estate of a vague hegemony among the German princes, and at last came to be an empty title, its very meaning forgotten by its degenerate bearers. And when in fulness of time its feeble pretence of life was extinguished by the brief word of Napoleon—'We no longer recognise the 'Germanic Constitution'—it passed unlamented without a struggle.

The marvel is, not that such a system failed or that it perished, but that the principle so long maintained its dominion over the intellect and will of mankind, even in England, which was

politically almost untouched by the Empire; that it held out so long against the young forces of Nationality and Democracy which were destined to undermine and overthrow it.

It is, I suppose, now accepted as an axiom (with certain exceptions) that a nation has a right to manage its own affairs—at any rate that there is no universal authority with a right to overrule its will—that the people is the source of power, and that the sanction of law is the consent of the governed. Such a theory is not in itself unchristian or even untheocratic, if it means that the delegated power of the Almighty, instead of being supernaturally committed to an individual, is naturally inherent in the whole people as His *clerus*. This is no new idea; it is found from the first, and most strongly at first, in the election of Pope and Emperor, originally free, though afterwards limited and formalised out of all semblance of a popular choice. It lies at the root of all sane theories of Divine Right—hereditary Divine Right, dependent on the accident of primogeniture, is a figment of the seventeenth century, unchristian, unpractical, and unhistorical.

In fact the essential difference between the mediæval and modern democratic theories of Government does not depend upon their different methods of appointing the chief officers of the State. In spite of the rude blows dealt it at the Reformation, the theory that the State is a Chris-

section which declares that Government errs chiefly in doing too little, who desire to see not merely the land and the means of production and transit in the hands of the State, but every department of human activity under Government control. Their ideal is a society not of liberty but of regulation, in which the citizen will be guided and checked at every turn by an expert administration, itself controlled by an alert and intelligent public opinion. The essential element of the system is not the elected representative but the trained official; it is the duty of Government to do what the people really wants, not what it thinks it wants. At the other extreme are those who hold that constraint based on free election is just as intolerable as the rule of the most capricious and violent autocrat. The origin of government is unimportant: all government is necessarily oppressive, and it is only offenders against the common weal who need the protection of Government. The only healthy society is the child of voluntary co-operation: crime is the result of artificial law, chiefly of the Law of Property: and when that stumbling-block has been removed, when the sources of wealth are common to all, and their fruits justly distributed, the need for constraint will disappear, and mankind will be able at last to follow its natural instinct and pursue the common good in fellowship and freedom.

We need not accept any of these doctrines, at least in their extreme form, but we must admit that they are so accepted, and that they all tend, with very different objects, to undermine the organisation of the State as we know it. And if the outspoken critics of our institutions threaten their stability, their silent critics are perhaps a yet more serious source of danger. We are in the midst of a General Election. The long period which has elapsed since the last dissolution of Parliament doubtless gives an unusual zest to the exercise of the franchise and its concomitant agitations; and where party feeling has run highest, we may fear that bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and evil-speaking have not been wholly put away from the minds and mouths of eager partisans. But happily we no longer emulate the violence of our forefathers in the early days of party government, when faction was a madness which knew no considerations of mercy, justice, or honour, and the fall of a Ministry was the signal for a reckless proscription of the defeated. That time is not so far removed from us. We may remember that when Sir Robert Walpole was at last outmanœuvred and forced to resign, his enemies were both surprised and annoyed that the fallen statesman should retain his head and his estate. To-day we consider the loss of power a sufficient penalty for the errors of a Minister;

and when some great political crisis is past, and the feeling it aroused has cooled, we are ready to acknowledge that there are sound hearts and clear heads on both sides. It is well that the time of such bloodthirsty reprisals has passed away; but we may question whether the day of plain issues and definite convictions is not passing too. The old lines of party cleavage are confused and obscured; and the eternal opposition of liberty and order is to be found to-day in individual temperaments on either side, rather than on the banners or in the principles of this party and that.

In such an environment there is no little temptation for persons of a refined and logical temper to withdraw from a battle in which the spoils appear to them to be more highly esteemed than the cause. These are the silent critics who are to be dreaded. They are profoundly sceptical of the efficacy of legislation. They realise too acutely that Government and Opposition are often divided by nothing more fundamental than names, which themselves are rapidly changing; and that able men are drawn into the ranks of one party or the other by chance or a cynical opportunism; and they easily convince themselves that the solemn pageantry of Debate is a tragic farce, and enthusiasm for men or measures a mask or a delusion.

It is a sufficiently attractive habit of mind, and

flattering to intellectual self-respect, but in its results it is either futile or pernicious. At the best it gives free play for the evils it condemns to grow and spread to every part of the body politic. At the worst it may lead to a kind of anarchism more destructive than the anarchism of the dagger and the bomb, because it saps foundations instead of battering at walls; a cautious and unprotesting pessimism, which agrees with the militant revolutionary that all Governments are bad, but deduces from that premiss the conclusion that the weakest Government is the least noxious; and holds that the philosopher will endure much minor injustice and inconvenience from a weak Government rather than rouse and strengthen it by attempts at opposition and reform.

The futile spirit that effects nothing, the sceptical spirit that despairs and denies, these are not the spirit of Christianity. The attitude of barren criticism is, of all things, not the answer we are seeking. What that answer will be depends chiefly upon Faith and Conscience. If we have even a tincture of that large sane Faith which inspired the Apostles, and which sees God in all His works, we shall not be afraid of any evil tidings; we shall not be found among those who cry in alarm that popular control is fatal to Religion, that if the Church and the World meet in fair field without favour, the World is

sure to win. We shall not look forward with resignation approaching complacency to a time when, as Cardinal Manning wrote, 'The Church 'of the last ages will be as the Church of the 'first, isolated and separate from the civil powers 'of the world;' nor resign despondently to the dominion of Evil the civilisation which Christianity has had so large a hand in forming. And while Faith gives us confidence, conscience will spur us to action. It will not let us rest in the fancy that a complicated society must be founded on misery and oppression; it will take the savour from our worship, while we know that our brethren for whom Christ died are living in conditions that, humanly speaking, make it impossible for them to live as Christians. The stinging sense of responsibility will drive us to use the instruments that are to hand, asking no question for conscience' sake, as Saint Thomas Aquinas used their own dialectical method against the mediæval rationalists in Paris University. If the Roman legionary and the Syrian tax-gatherer might enter into the kingdom of heaven, surely the machinery of English political life is not too deeply tainted with worldliness to be used for righteous ends. True, we cannot make men virtuous by Act of Parliament; but if an Act of Parliament is the solemn record of the nation's will that ancient evil should cease, it is a significant and holy thing.

I am not pleading for a Church party in Parliament, or for the Church as identified with any party. God forbid. It is for a greater thing than that—a plain statement and a new realisation of the Claim of Christ in every part of human life.

I believe the hope of the future is with Christianity. I will dare to say with the Church of England, if it does not make the great Refusal, and so orders itself as to convince men that it is seeking first no tithes of mint and anise and cummin; but the weightier matters of the Law—Justice, Mercy, and Truth.

PATRIOTISM [1]

'If I forget thee, O Jerusalem.'—PSALM cxxxvii. 5.

OCTOBER 25th is marked in our English Church Calendar as the day of Crispin Martyr, and if we have the curiosity to inquire further concerning him, we find that he was one of a pair of brothers, Crispinus and Crispinianus, who went from Rome with St. Denys in the third century to evangelise Gaul. The brothers settled themselves at Soissons, and preached the Gospel there; but desiring, after the example of the Apostle of the Gentiles, not to be burdensome to their converts, they learned the craft of shoemaking, and supported themselves by its exercise, so that they are to this day patron saints of cordwainers and leather workers. We read further that they were cruelly persecuted by Riccius Varus, the heathen governor of Soissons, being plunged first into a frozen river, and then into boiling pitch; and although their lives were miraculously preserved through these trials, they won the crown of martyrdom at last, being beheaded by order of Maximian on October 25, 288.

But the significance of the name, if it has any

[1] All Saints, Knightsbridge, October 25, 1908.

meaning at all for English ears and English minds, does not belong to that year or that story. Just as the 24th of August is marked for ever in the human calendar by a memory that

> 'Runs the leaf across
> Like a splash of blood, intense, abrupt,'

and St. Bartholomew recalls, not the gentle spirit of him in whom was no guile, but a summer night at Paris in 1574, the tocsin sounding from the tower of St. Germain of Auxerre, and a frenzied king shooting down his subjects from a window of the Louvre; so, but in a happier way, St. Crispin's Day belongs for us not to 288, but to 1415. It is associated not with Soissons, but with another French town, which we do not frame our lips to pronounce other than in English wise—Agincourt; and it is doubtless that connexion which saved for the pious cobbler of Soissons his place in our calendar when greater saints were ejected and forgotten. But St. Crispin's hope and claim to be remembered by Englishmen does not rest only or chiefly on the brief entry that the calendar gives him. The genius of Shakespeare has immortalised his name in the superb and convincing rhodomontade which he speaks from the lips of Henry V. on the eve of the battle, with its refrain of St. Crispian, St. Crispin's Day, and its magnificent assurance of undying honour in victory or defeat:

> 'Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
> From this day to the ending of the world,
> But we in it shall be rememberéd,
> We few, we happy few, we band of brothers.'

We happy few, happy not in spite of their almost desperate position, but because of it; because in the full tide and enjoyment of life they stood in imminent peril of death. It is a notable and heroic view of happiness, and it suggests to-day another scene in English history, another Englishman on whom descended a double portion of that spirit. Last Wednesday was Trafalgar Day —one could almost grudge that it too did not chance to fall, like Agincourt and Balaclava, on Crispin Crispian—and once again, on the hundred and third year after the great sea-fight, the flags flew in the wet autumn breeze, to honour the memory of Nelson. The thoughts of Nelson on this matter do not come to us distilled in the alembic of a poet's imagination. We can read his mind as he himself expressed it in plain prose:

'Trowbridge went ashore with the *Culloden*, 'and was able to take no part in the Battle of 'the Nile. The merits of that ship and her 'gallant captain,' wrote Nelson to the Admiralty, 'are too well known to benefit by anything I 'could say. Her misfortune was great in getting 'aground when her more fortunate companions 'were in the full tide of happiness.' Hear him

again at Copenhagen: 'A shot through the 'mainmast knocked the splinters about, and he 'observed to one of his officers with a smile, "It 'is warm work, and this may be the last to any 'of us at any moment." And then, stopping short 'at the gangway, added with emotion, "But mark 'you, I would not be elsewhere for thousands."'

Nelson is accounted the greatest of naval commanders, but he does not stand alone; he is *primus inter pares*, the type of a long and unbroken line of English seamen, inspired by the same spirit, uplifted with the same clear joy in the presence of death and danger. You would do well to read through the essay from which I have quoted, R. L. Stevenson's "Essay on the English Admirals," which, in its illuminating analysis of the heroic character, casts a sidelight on the innate heroism of the author's own nature.

In Nelson, then, and in Shakespeare's 'Henry V.,' we get the fine flower, the highest manifestation of a quality not peculiar to them, but common in Englishmen of all ranks, at all times of our history, and existing in ourselves at least to this degree, that something in our nature cannot help responding to it. It is the record of the mind of these men rather than their deeds which stirs our blood; and the stir of emotion is not all. Our reason and conscience also cannot but approve even fantastic expressions of a feeling which loses sight of commonplace motives, and

common-sense estimates, in sublime abandonment to a higher purpose.

And now let us turn for a moment if you please from particular illustrations, and consider more generally what is this great psychic force which finds its most striking and picturesque expression in perfect readiness to be wounded or killed if need be for the sake of an object in which a man will apparently have no share, and discover if we can, what manner of training has brought men, and brings them, calm and cheerful to their perilous hour, and meanwhile inspires them to the daily exercise of a self-devotion, tamer and duller in semblance, but not less real nor less sternly opposed to all that is sordid and interested. We name the force Patriotism, but it remains difficult to account for or define. It is something more than the call of the blood, family affection on a large scale; the Land, it would seem, has more to say in it than the Race. What is an Englishman, a Scotsman, an Irishman racially? Irish patriotism in particular seems to spring naturally from the local influences of that beautiful and forlorn island, which works its magic for good or evil upon the souls of men of Celtic, Norman, and Saxon blood indifferently. Nevertheless though patriotism may be indefinable and unaccountable, it is an extremely real and practical force, and has grown in power within the last century. It is the fashion in some quarters

to decry it as petty and parochial, an archaic survival too narrow for the dignity of that cosmopolitan philanthropy which should be the ideal of intelllgent and civilised mankind. But people who talk like this seem to display the same ignorance of or indifference to some of the deepest-rooted instincts of human nature which vitiates so many of the more ambitious schemes of State socialism. They have to postulate, as the basis of one day's effective working, the general existence of characteristics which it would take years of effective working to produce.

And in this matter of nationality and national feeling the pendulum just now is swinging the other way. The national spirit has grown rather than diminished in the last generation. We may not perhaps regard it as a sign of true progress: we may not be able to account for it, but we must take it into account, and allow ourselves to be guided by the facts as they are, not entirely by a theory of what they ought to be, if we desire seriously to advance the welfare of mankind, or even to study its ways and prospects to any purpose. It is doubtless well to look forward to a time when all barriers of division will be cast down, and all humanity be joined in one great brotherhood. Meanwhile we must recognise divisions because they exist, and be content to work for brotherhood within the circle of 'Great 'Britain and Ireland, and the British Dominions

'beyond the Sea.' And we shall have to respect still narrower and more local patriotisms, accepting and using the undoubted good that is in them. For indeed local patriotisms *are*, and are good. Loyalty and self-sacrifice are at first only to be learned in a small and clearly defined society which the untrained mind can grasp as it were at a single glance. A friend of mine who is working among the poor in South-east London, has told me that their great difficulty and their first step in success is to make a Bermondsey boy proud of being a Bermondsey boy. Aristotle tells us that the cityless man who does not owe allegiance and pay service to some particular spot of inhabited earth is a kind of monster: and a famous poet expresses the same reactionary idea when he asks—

> 'Lives there a man with soul so dead,
> Who never to himself has said,
> This is my own, my native land?'

At the same time it is well to realise that criticism which appears captious to us may yet direct our attention to real and curable defects in that which we admire and prize so much that we are tempted to resent any criticism of it, just or unjust. In this matter of patriotism, for instance, it is wholesome to consider very seriously the causes which led to the emergence of the Little Englander, much as we may dislike and despise that unworthy citizen; and still more, the causes

which make the word Imperialism an offence to a large number of our fellow-countrymen, who cannot possibly be called Little Englanders. Such consideration, and the more agreeable study of similar phenomena among other nations, and in other ages, will show us, I think, that strange things have now and then masqueraded successfully under the name of patriotism, such things as greed and personal ambition on the one hand, and on the other a crazy hatred and suspicion of foreigners, with its inevitable concomitants of panic and national hysteria. We shall be confirmed in the opinion that the loudest patriots are not always the deepest or the most intelligent. Now none of these counterfeits can be allowed to taint and discredit the patriotism of a Christian and civilised people. Their patriotism must be neither self-interested nor hysterical; it will be a sane and passionate love for what is really admirable in the nation to which they belong; expressed rather by what they are, and what they do, than by what they say; or if finding utterance in words at all, then in few and quiet words neither abject nor provocative. This conception of patriotism corresponds to the traditional character of the Englishman, in its defects as well as its virtues; honest, reserved, and inarticulate, with an unshakable consciousness of superiority, which made him incurious and uninterested as to the ways of other nations, impas-

sive in success, sullenly refusing to admit defeat. But we are frequently told nowadays, and there seems some reason to believe that it is true, that the national character has greatly changed, even within the memory of living men; that whatever may be the cause—and one writer in a book I was reading lately puts it down to cheap newspapers and the Salvation Army—the average Englishman, or rather the mass of Englishmen, is no longer reserved and impassive, but querulous and emotional, avid of cheap sentiment expressed in tawdry rhetoric, wavering between undue adulation and undue disparagement of foreigners, and with a strong touch of the *nous sommes trahis* spirit which we patronisingly ascribe to the French. Such an exaggerated Cassandra-wail over national decadence is, of course, a lively example of the qualities which it deprecates. But in it, too, there are some grains of truth. It is true that the old reserve is largely giving place to a mania for self-revelation and self-expression which is adroitly used by the charlatan and the adventurer for their own ends; and it is unfortunately true that nowhere can the crank and the schemer push their interests and their whimsies so effectively and so securely as under the veil of patriotism. They are, we trust, a small class, but they are noisy and persistent, and the public listens undiscerning, and takes them at their own valuation. It is time sharply

to recall, strongly to maintain the sincerer, more manly note in our patriotism; to insist, especially by example, that its expression must be in deeds and in a habit of mind, more than in words; and at any rate shall not be in screams either of self-approval or alarm. And that resolve, we may still hope and believe, is in the hearts of the great silent mass of Englishmen; for we are truly past the zenith of our greatness if it is not there. That ideal of patriotism still stands unshaken and undimmed for us, though we be sometimes bewildered by clamour, and carried away by spurious enthusiasms. Blessed is the country that can preserve this ideal. Her people will love her constantly and ardently, with a love happily compact of instinct and reason. And that same love will make them keenly alive to the faults which mar the fair fabric, and keep the beloved Commonwealth from being the perfect Commonwealth. They will be somewhat reticent about these defects, feeling the shame of their motherland as their own shame; and set themselves rather to amend than to complain. But they will not whimper or prevaricate under the criticism of hostile or kindly observation, or the more trenchant criticism of facts. They will die, if need be, unflinchingly in the Land's defence against aggression or disloyalty, being assured that their cause is good, and last, in the dark hour of defeat and national humiliation, if that

should come, they will not desert or revile the mother that bore them, but love her and serve her in patience and with a double loyalty.

Let us remember that the words of our text were spoken beside the waters of Babylon, in time of exile, of the apparent extinction of the nation's hope. For this is the test which separates the true patriotism from the counterfeit. Success is the very breath of life to the sham, whether it be the child of self-interest or of excitement; to the real it is—not nothing, it is a great deal—but nothing that can touch patriotism. For here in our last sentence we come upon the true foundation of patriotism — Faith in the Wisdom and Justice of God who has given us our country and our love of our country. If we have that, defeat and disaster will not dismay or paralyse us; they will be half welcome with their fuller opportunities of self-forgetful service, and give a new and sacred meaning to Browning's words—

> 'Here and here has England helped me,
> How can I help England?'

HUMILITY [1]

'Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

'For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

'For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

'But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

'But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.'—1 COR. i. 20–24.

I DO not know what manner of man was the Rev. William Master, Vicar of Preston, near Cirencester, who in the year 1684 bequeathed a benefaction for the purpose of this sermon; but it is not difficult to picture in the history of his times causes which might well stir a devout and thoughtful clergyman to fear for the Church he served, the sin of Pride; to desire for her the grace of Humility.

It is true that the first fever of Restoration loyalty soon grew cool; but for a while yet the Church rode high and higher on the wave of reaction against Puritanism and all its works, which so strangely mingled saints and sinners in the throng of her eager partisans.

[1] Humility Sermon, St. Mary's, Oxford, February 14, 1904.

'The religious members of the Cavalier party,' says Macaulay, 'were conscientiously attached 'to the whole system of their Church. She had 'been dear to their murdered king. She had 'consoled them in defeat and penury. Her ser- 'vice, so often whispered in an inner chamber 'during the season of trial, had such a charm for 'them that they were unwilling to part with a 'single response. Other Royalists, who made 'little pretence to piety, yet loved the episcopal 'Church because she was the foe of their foes.

'She had been pillaged and oppressed by the 'party which preached an austere morality. She 'had been restored to opulence and honour by 'libertines. Little as the men of mirth and fashion 'were disposed to shape their lives according to 'her precepts, they were yet ready to fight knee- 'deep in blood for her cathedrals and palaces, for 'every line of her rubrics and every thread of her 'vestments.'

It seemed, indeed, as if the evil days had passed away for ever. No longer now might grim parliamentary captains thrust into her temples to break down the carved work thereof with axes and hammers, and silence the voice of prayer and praise. And the remembrance of these things served only to make the day of restitution and triumph more glorious, and alas to whet the taste for a vengeance which was not denied her. The whole weight of the secular

power was for the moment at her service. 'The 'House of Commons was, during some years, 'more zealous for Royalty than the King, more 'zealous for Episcopacy than the Bishops.' The opportunity or the temptation was too great to be resisted, and in no long time the men who had oppressed her, had driven out her ministers and forbidden her services, were themselves hunted outlaws, and with them many others whose only crime was opinion.

'The gaols were soon crowded with dissen- 'ters; and, among the sufferers, were some of 'whose genius and virtue any Christian society 'might well be proud.

'The Church of England was not ungrateful 'for the protection which she received from the 'government. From the first day of her existence 'she had been attached to monarchy. But, during 'the quarter of a century which followed the Re- 'storation, her zeal for royal authority and here- 'ditary right passed all bounds. She had suffered 'with the House of Stuart. She had been re- 'stored with that House. She was connected 'with it by common interests, friendships, and 'enmities. It seemed impossible that a day could 'ever come when the ties which bound her to the 'children of her august martyr would be sundered, 'and when the loyalty in which she gloried would 'cease to be a pleasing and profitable duty.'

Yet it is but just to add that a servile loyalty

was not the only quality on which the Caroline Church might pride herself, there were to be found in her 'divines qualified by parts, by 'eloquence, by wide knowledge of literature, of 'science, and of life, to defend their Church vic- 'toriously against heretics and sceptics, to com- 'mand the attention of frivolous and worldly 'congregations, to guide the deliberations of 'senates, and to make religion respectable, even 'in the most dissolute of courts.'

We know how it ended: we know in how few years from this time the Church of England was fighting for its life against the royal power which had seemed its staunchest ally, its unfailing protector; how its victory was only secured on the distasteful condition of exchanging a Roman Catholic for a Calvinist king. We have learned, too, that there are worse evils than peril and humiliation; that privilege may be too dearly bought at the price of dependence. That a Church whose chief ministers are the creatures of intrigue and expediency, selected and commissioned to cry, Peace, when there is no peace, such a Church, I say, will have no very convincing message to the hearts of men.

But for the moment it was a brilliant scene of political, social, and even in a measure of intellectual ascendency; a scene to uplift the hearts of fools with pride, and to stir even in wiser men a delusive sense of security, a feeling that a state

of things so desirable and so comely was providential, and must endure.

We may thank God, or admit with reluctance and dismay, according to our disposition, that the Church in our day is exposed to no such temptation. In this Lent of 1904 there is surely good reason why the grace of humility should not be very far from any loyal Churchman, any earnest Christian: rather it is thrust upon us so instantly, that the fear is it may fill the whole field of vision, blotting out hope, and courage, and endeavour, and fainting itself into despondency and doubt.

It is not only that the Church of England has long ceased to be, if it ever was since the Reformation, in any but a formal and official sense, the National Church; and if we wish to escape ridicule, we must avoid introducing into controversy arguments founded on what the name should imply.

It is not only that we are attacked on every side by able and unscrupulous opponents; and, far more serious, by opponents single-minded and enthusiastic only for good.

The causes of our disquiet lie deeper than that; for it is not the Church of England only that is on trial, and must justify *ab initio* claims that long, perhaps too long, have been taken for granted.

We are told that Christianity is a spent force both as a philosophy and as a spring of action,

that its answer to the problem of existence can no longer satisfy the intelligent mind, that its sanctions have lost their cogency, its consolations their power.

Our answer to these suggestions is an uncompromising No. We believe that the essential relations between God and man are unchanging, that no new thing can take the place of the Christian faith as an incentive to right action, and as its best and all-sufficient reward. In many respects the problem which confronts us is curiously similar to that which the apostles met nineteen hundred years ago. There is the same intellectual unrest, the same eager longing for a Gospel which shall satisfy needs deeper than the need of bodily well-being and amusement; and on the other hand there are the slave classes on which our civilisation is based, the oppressed, the suffering, the hopeless in this world's hope.

And in answer to their cry we have the same message, Jesus Christ and him crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, to the Greeks foolishness, but to them that believe, the wisdom of God and the power of God; the message of Paul, of Ulphilas, of Augustine. And if it be true that our world is repaganised, that the worship of the great god Self in its many forms, from the most brutal to the most refined, is to-day the one constraining force among the multitude of men, while nobler spirits, turning heart-sickened from

the Comus rout of gold-seekers and pleasure-seekers; yet can find no rest for their souls in the faith of their fathers, but must tread the rough path of duty unguided and uncomforted, uncertain alike of their sanction and their goal; if this be true, the cause is not that the Gospel has lost its virtue, not that mankind has reached and overpassed the moral standard set by Jesus of Nazareth; but we, the ministers of Christ, the stewards of the mysteries of God, must confess with deep contrition, that we are unprofitable servants, we have *not* done that which it was our duty to do.

Not that we have not tried. It would very ill become me to depreciate the unwearied, self-forgetting efforts of men who are giving their substance, and their strength, and their lives, to win souls for their Master in the mission-field abroad, and the grimmer mission-field at home. We see, sometimes, from these pleasant shores of Oxford, enough of our brethren's battle with the storm and tempest without to make us ashamed. But this is the strange thing, this is the sad thing, the thing to make us wonder and despair, and resolve that so far as in us lies it shall be changed; in face of all this effort, all this devotion, the Church has lost, and is losing—it has lost—God's blessing on those who are striving to regain—the very poor, those for whom once it was easiest to enter into the kingdom of God;

those whom it was the reproach and the glory of the Apostolic Church to have caught and held—and it is losing, losing fast among the educated classes, and especially it is losing the young, the generation that is growing up; 'the increasing 'number of those who, having received the modern 'intellectual education, feel half unconsciously that 'the old religious teaching is inadequate to meet 'their needs; young minds trained in a real know-'ledge of the material world, and of humanity, who 'need an equally real knowledge of the religion 'which they are asked to believe.' And if that knowledge is denied them, we know too well what is the result.

The many who are not endowed with super-abundant moral vitality are content to relapse into a more or less graceful hedonism: others, impatient with what seems to them mere myth and emotion, resolve to stand where they can plant their feet firm, on the ground of science and history, and leave the fairy-tales of religion to the priest and the fanatic; but theirs is not the most tragic case, they have their reward. The cruellest tragedy is for those, the very elect, heroic souls that would have made saints and martyrs in a simpler age, but to-day are paralysed for want of a Belief—seeking a central motive to co-ordinate and rationalise blind impulses to good, and finding none; they long to believe, but intellectual difficulties of faith repel

them, some real and intrinsic, some of man's ingenious, fond devising, and their reverence for what they hold most sacred will not let them believe. They are not

> 'Idle fools that cast the light away
> For pastime; only hatred of a lie
> And love of truth constrain them, till the night
> Be done, and God in mercy sendeth day.'

But for too many in our time the night is long and dark, and the loss of service infinite to the Church and to themselves. I think any Christian with sympathy and insight must know that this is no fancy picture, but the true transcript of what is going on all about us every day, even if it wake no memories of one's own life. What are we doing for these men and women for whom Christ died?

It is no use confronting them with authority, or mocking their trouble with platitudes. We must not repel them with the frigid *non possumus* of satisfied orthodoxy, branding their earnest search after truth as sin: it were better for us that a millstone were hanged about our necks, and we were drowned in the depths of the sea. They are very near the kingdom of God. The question on which turns the very existence of our Church, and something more important than the existence of any particular Church, is, How are we to help them to cross the barrier which seems to

us so frail, but is to them as inexorable as the flaming sword of the angel that barred the gate of Paradise?

Not by a Chinese conservatism, an obstinate adherence to every letter of formulas which bear the stamp of an age which is not our age, and are in danger of hiding from the modern intelligence the truths which they symbolise, of which they were once the best expression. It is idle to appeal to fourth-century, or twelfth-century, or sixteenth-century formulas as final. Perhaps it was pardonable in those who drew them to imagine that they had reached an absolute and unalterable presentment of Truth; but for us they are only landmarks in the onward march which is unending while the human race endures. If the student of nature is as a child picking up pebbles on the shore of a boundless ocean, what is the student of God? Advance and change in the externals of religious thought are no new thing, no deadly thing. They are the note of a living Church, a living Faith. Religious forms are not, and cannot be, the same to-day as they were long ago. We are the heirs of a long progress of Christian thought, a long series of changes and advances in the conception of the nature of God and His relation to man. And if we are to be true Christians, true to ourselves and to those who come after, we must not rest upon what has been done; we must unflinchingly take up the

task of seeing God not as men whose outlook on life was different saw Him, but as we can best see Him and help others to see Him.

But if it is our duty to find a *credo* which shall put the Eternal truths to twentieth-century minds in a form which they can understand and accept, that duty will not be best performed by jettisoning one after another the articles of the Christian Faith as they happen to prove inconvenient. We believe that we have a message strangely at variance with ordinary human experience, and yet more strongly opposed to the standards and desires of unregenerate humanity; and it is from that very antagonism that its attraction as well as its repulsion springs. It is bad policy, if we dared to do it, to minimise in essentials. Or, to put it on other grounds, it is a profoundly unscientific process, either to shrink from Truth because it is difficult or unpalatable, or to disregard one half of the evidence, by dismissing spiritual and mystical phenomena, which are every whit as real, if they are not so easy to classify, as the facts of our physical life. The task of winnowing the husk from the grain, of separating the essential from the adventitious, is a task of infinite labour and delicacy, and involves a necessary evil, which seems almost to undo, *pari passu*, all the good that can be done by the sincere student, the evil of controversy. In all times of stir and progress it is inevitable that there

should be collision, not only between those who are moving in opposite directions, but between those who are moving in the same direction at different speeds. But if controversy be a necessary evil, the controversial spirit which finds pleasure in disputation at the cost of charity is a very unnecessary evil, as alien to the spirit of Christianity, as it is prejudicial to calm and fruitful inquiry after truth. If we needed a call to Humility, we could surely find it in the columns of the religious press. We are not wholly responsible for our divisions, but the bitterness which perpetuates and widens them is a weapon forged and sharpened by ourselves for the hands of our enemies; to Christians a shame and sorrow, and still worse a grievous hindrance of all missionary work, a stumblingblock in the way of honest seekers after God.

Hence follows the truth of the paradox that Uniformity of Use is really important to the welfare of a Church; it is not bondage, but a condition of wholesome worship, and free thought. We are all agreed, I think, in the last resort, that the mere externals of worship are in themselves *ἀδιάφορα*, valuable only for what they symbolise—but so long as they vary from parish to parish, as monstrously as they do now vary, we cannot help being reminded of disputed points of liturgical detail, at the very time when we most desire to withdraw our thoughts from earthly considera-

tions. All this distraction and irritation is truly gratuitous, and the blame of it lies not wholly on one party or the other, but on both. The man who attaches superstitious importance to the omission of ceremonies is no wiser than he who unreasonably insists on their observance. Ceremonial in religion is like atmospheric air in this, that we use it without thinking of it, if we use it profitably; when we become conscious of it, it is probably pernicious. Is it even now too late to ask if Christians, or at least Churchmen, will not come to some agreement to give up quarrelling over mint and anise and cummin, and keep their intelligence and energy for the weightier matters of the law?

But although controversy for its own sake and on trifles is an unmixed evil, there are principles which we must maintain at all hazards, if the ministry we have taken upon us has any meaning. Yet even here there are considerations, which by limiting the area, and chastening the temper of debate, will help us to save our loyalty, at the least possible cost of rancour and offence.

I take it to be an axiomatic truth which we are constantly forgetting, that every ceremony, and in some measure every doctrine, loses its efficiency as a means of grace as long as, and in so far as, it is matter of polemical discussion.

Remembering this, we might be more chary about making battle-flags of our dearest convic-

tions; we might wonder less at the reluctance of the candid extern to adopt doctrines which have been so employed.

Second, the proof of religious conviction lies not in logic but in life, and it is the only proof that will satisfy the believer or convert the incredulous. It would be quite easy to erect upon the historical data of Christianity an entirely unobjectionable and unassailable system, excluding the supernatural, and limiting Omnipotence to the conditions of human thought and human knowledge, with a sceptical anthropomorphism as grotesque as the fancies of the devout and unlettered Italian peasant. It has been done, and it has moved nothing. Conversely, any Church, any sect, which contrived to act up to its admitted principles, or within measurable distance of them, would need no other evidence of its divine mission. That is what the Apostles did, and whenever Christians have done it since the effect has been immediate, apparent, and even lasting. And if I may venture for a moment upon ground that craves very wary going, I do not think the life is wholly comprehended in philanthropy and organisation. To feed the hungry and clothe the naked is no small part of what Christ asks of His disciples; yet man cannot live by bread alone, and to associate the ideas of religion and alms-receiving too closely in the minds of the poor is a perilous experiment. We are told on very high

authority that you must make people comfortable before you can make them Christians; but it was not the way the Apostles went to work. They went first to the very poor and the outcast, finding that those who lacked most in this world's goods needed the Gospel most, and welcomed it most gladly. The wise economy of labour and money, which are the conditions of success, can only be secured by careful organisation; but organisation has taken the heart out of a great deal of charity. It may be doubted if the quality of mercy which takes the form of a banker's order to pay an annual subscription is twice blest; it loses half its savour for him that takes, all often for him that gives. To compound for personal interest and contact with those who need and suffer, by a money payment, is a very poor spiritual investment.

To talk like this is perhaps to write oneself down *advocatus diaboli:* but it is worth while pleading the other side, when the process of canonisation has gone so far that we are in danger of slipping unawares into *Latria*, and worshipping these things for themselves.

The appeal of Christianity is not primarily material, though it bids us see in every man a neighbour who has a claim upon our service not to be denied: it is not merely intellectual, for it transcends the sphere of logical and scientific demonstration; it is a personal appeal, the cry of the soul that has known it, to the soul that

knows it not yet; and its motive and justification are personal too; for they are in the Person of Jesus Christ, as it is presented in the New Testament. Criticism of the exact historical value and authenticity of the books is beside the mark. No methods of human science can explain, any more than they can blot out, the Central Figure. The point is not how it came there, but that it is there. Its existence and the transforming influence it has had upon the souls of men are objective facts in the history of humanity—facts which I submit can only be accounted for, and are best expressed, if imperfectly at the best, in terms of Christian belief.

But it is a long step from recording the personality of Christ to apprehending it. Scientific Truth makes its appeal to the intellect, we may say the trained intellect only: Ethical Truth to the intellect and the conscience; but Divine Truth demands the surrender of the whole being, intellect, moral sense, and emotion; it supplies not only the obligation, but the motive and the power to live rightly. To see Christ as He is, is to be like Him, and our unlikeness to Him is the measure of our real ignorance. Until we are more like Him, we Christians, ordained and unordained alike, till with eyes purged from superstition and self-interest we can see Him as He is, we can never show Him to others; and surely this is the secret of the ill success of the churches.

Before we can win the world we must win for ourselves something of the personal magnetism which made all sorts of men willing captives to the Apostles, which the Apostles had from being with Jesus, from a knowledge of Him, which was strangely dull and imperfect while He was yet with them on earth, but grew ever deeper and clearer after He had departed from them.

It has not been granted to us to see Him with our bodily eyes, a man among men on the hillsides of Galilee and in the streets of Jerusalem—but it is as true for us as it was for them, that by contemplation of our Master's work, and whatever we find most like it in this world, we may best hope to compass our desire, and lead men to him. The Evangelist has given us a simple picture of Christ's way of dealing with the people whom He would bring to the knowledge of God which is life eternal; the way He used Himself, and the way He commended to His disciples.

'The people followed Him, and He received 'them and spake unto them of the kingdom of 'God, and healed them that had need of healing;' and again, 'He sent them to preach the kingdom 'of God and to heal the sick.'

Humility is the keynote of our thoughts to-day, and there is no truer mark, no sharper test of humility than readiness to learn. The age of miracles, we say, has passed, we content our-

selves with the spiritual side of the apostolic office, and leave healing to the physician and the surgeon. Still, even now, it may chance to be wholesome for the Faculty of Theology to sit at the feet of her younger sister of Medicine, and see what lesson she may gain in the method of Christ.

The medical profession in this country needs no panegyric from me. Its sufficient reward is in its work, its best credentials lie in the silent gratitude of sufferers relieved, in the unreflecting confidence with which all men ask its help in the hour of distress. But for our own sake we may consider some phenomena which are truly remarkable in an age supposed to be given up to money-getting and selfish luxury. We see a calling in which the prizes are few and uncertain; the one thing certain, and, as it would seem, the one thing earnestly desired, is hard and exacting work. The approach to this calling is guarded by a long and arduous training, full of drudgery and distasteful detail, which yet has a magical charm which turns many an idle youth into a passionate student; one whose studies end often only with life. And when the gate is passed it leads to long years of unremitting labour, ill paid in money or reputation. The researcher in his laboratory works long hours day and night, without haste, without rest; and, his discovery made, hastens to impart it to his brethren, and devote it to the service of suffering mankind. The

country doctor must be abroad all weathers on his weary round, and must not grudge to sacrifice his hours of hard-earned rest in answer to a sudden call; yet he will not grow impatient with the inarticulate pain, the half-animal suspicion of the peasant, or stint his care where he will receive neither fee nor gratitude. In the town the doctor plunges undismayed into foul and wicked alleys where the policeman dare not follow him, in his battle with disease. 'He will take more 'trouble,' it was said to me the other day, 'and 'go into worse places to treat a man's body, than 'a parson will to save a soul.' If that is true, or only partly true, it gives us pause to think. And again, even if his practice lies among richer patients, the physician is forced to see the ugly underside, the sorrow and suffering and a great deal of the sin, of the civilised life that seems to run so smooth and bright. And not seldom he is able from the stores of his sympathy and experience to minister to a mind diseased, not less than to bodily distempers.

I have not spoken of hospitals, but surely it is a wonderful and blessed thing that the poorest should have at call all the skill and care and knowledge that money can buy for the rich.

It is quite true that some doctors make large fortunes, and have honours and distinction; but they are the few, and they would be the first to declare that they have done no better work than

others who live on a pittance all their lives, whose names are unknown.

There is no need to heighten the picture by an appeal to sentiment. We all know how true and far-reaching is the brotherhood of the craft, and many of us have come across acts of singular kindness and delicacy done by medical men quite outside the lines of professional duty; but apart from that, the zeal and patience, the courage and self-surrender and single-mindedness strangely resemble the ideal which we profess to follow—and to the shame be it spoken of an age which calls itself either scientific or philanthropic, the note of misrepresentation and persecution is not wholly wanting.

The truth is, the doctors are doing half of Christ's work, and doing it, whatever be their acknowledged creed, in the spirit which He inspired in His disciples. It remains to ask, how are we doing the other half, we Christians; and again I say, laity as well as clergy? On the whole, I fear not so well, to judge by results. We do not inspire the same confidence; we are not met always by the same eager appeal from those who are uneasy about their condition. We have seen something of the qualities which give healers their success; is the absence of them the cause of comparative failure in the teachers? How are we to catch something of their spirit, the spirit of absolute devotion to the work for

the work's sake, which with us is for Christ's sake?

Of external means that might help us back to the apostolic standpoint there is one greatly recommended and as greatly resented, I mean disestablishment. It is immensely attractive. To maintain such a connection between the State and the Church, which is not accepted by a large proportion of the citizens, is logically absurd; and disestablishment would at least set us free to manage our own business, and rid us of the preposterous supremacy of a Parliament which, whatever may be the belief of individual members, is officially and collectively agnostic. But on the other hand an all-sufficient argument against hasty action is the case of country districts.

In towns, I have no doubt, the Church would be able to hold its own with hardly a shock. If we compare Church expenditure with income from endowments in towns, we shall find that the latter are generally inconsiderable in the account, and the organisation is practically self-supporting. But in the country, the parson would temporarily at least disappear; some people would say his ministrations would be no great loss; but, religion apart, they would show their ignorance of country parishes. The clergyman in rural districts is more than a spiritual director. He is an almoner, often drawing without stint on his own scanty purse; he is the link between his parish and the unknown

world outside; he is guide, philosopher, and friend to many who are not very enthusiastic religionists, and he still provides most of the social and literary culture which is provided at all.

But to pass from a special case, which may be judged more a matter of expediency than principle: we shall be wise to distrust all royal roads out of our difficulty. There is no superstition more deeply engrained in the heart of man than the belief in the magical virtue of such definite outward acts as this, and yet there is no magic in them at all; they may be the mark, they cannot be the cause of an inward change. We must come back in the last resort to the old discredited reform, that each man should reform himself; or to put it more solemnly, we must set ourselves, each according to the gift that is in him, be it study, or be it service, to know more of the Mind of Christ, and knowing it, to conform to it our own minds and souls, and so shall we have the spirit and the power of teachers.

It is a matter which touches us all very nearly; but the problem has an especial instancy for our Universities and Colleges, and for us who have for the moment the government of them in our charge. They were founded as places of religious learning: how far they still deserve that name may be a question. But at least they have never formally renounced the high office of providing that there may never be wanting fit persons to

serve God in Church and State ; and I think we should bitterly resent being told that we have failed in it altogether. That at any rate is the purpose of our being, our claim to continued maintenance and tolerance ; to send the pick of young Englishmen out into life fully equipped to play a man's part in the battle of good and evil. And if religion be, as I have tried to show, the knowledge of God permeating every part of a man's being, inspiring, guiding, strengthening, and consoling, surely it forms a main part of that equipment, if indeed it be not the one thing needful.

It has always been agreed that it does not matter so much what school a man reads up here ; it may even be admitted that it is not of vital importance what particular studies we insist on as essential, and what we remit. The wheel goes its round, books and subjects have their day and are forgotten, and remembered again. But always the thing that is expected from our training, the thing that we pride ourselves on producing, is Character : the firm will, the sane outlook, the wise judgment, and of that wisdom who shall deny in this place that the beginning is the fear of God ?

Do we still train men in the fear and knowledge of God, or do we leave religious questions to outside agencies, and content ourselves with educating the body and the mind? And meanwhile, are we unwittingly providing a quite other

training, a training in luxury and expense, in coarse or delicate self-indulgence, in pride and exclusiveness, in contented futility, in false standards and base or trivial ideals? God forbid. Let us humbly pray Him to pardon our shortcomings, that it may not yet be said to us, as it has been said to many great and prosperous societies: 'Give an account of thy stewardship; 'for thou mayest be no longer steward.'

PEACE [1]

'Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.'—JOHN xiv. 27.

PEACE; that is the message of the Sundays after Easter; that is the gift which the Risen Lord promised to the disciples whom He was leaving to carry on His work on earth—inward peace in the heart; outward peace of brethren one with another. And year by year, as the season comes again, we have grown accustomed to hear the sacred words read, we feel a kind of comfort in listening to them, we even think that we receive the gift.

'Not as the world giveth, give I unto you.' If we could release our minds by an effort from the numbing influence of custom, which by mere repetition takes all the force and colour from the most compelling, the most startling utterances; if we constrain ourselves to read the familiar words as it were for the first time, can we not, must we not find in them a note almost of divine irony, sorrowful foreknowledge of that which was to be, a foreboding which finds its direct expression in that other warning which we accept

[1] Westminster Abbey, April 22, 1906.

so lightly: 'Think not that I am come to send 'peace upon earth: I am not come to send peace, 'but a sword.'

Not as the world giveth, not in any plain sense known to the mind of unenlightened man has the promised peace descended on the Church.

We look abroad on Life, on Christianity as we know it, on the Church of England, and we see many good things; many things encouraging, many things that are better than they were. There is a growing stir and interest in spiritual things, eccentric and ill-guided in some of its manifestations, but at least in strong and hopeful contrast to the dead indifference which is the one fatal bar to religious progress. There is an increasing sense that man's life is not bounded by material conditions, a conviction that the things seen are temporal, but the things not seen are eternal.

In the sphere of scholarship we find the criticism which some of us fear so much, escaping from the melancholy barrenness of the spirit which denies all, and advancing on the lines of a sincere and uncompromising search for Truth, directing all its ingenuity and labour in no irreverent spirit to ascertain what Jesus Christ really was and did and taught when He was on earth.

And nowhere, I think, is there more ground for that tempered satisfaction which does not rest, but presses on to fresh achievement, than in the saner and more moral views of social and

economic obligation which are spreading among us. Men are learning, slowly, painfully, and unwillingly, to remember, and even in some measure to understand their duty to their neighbour. The answer of Cain, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' is no longer accepted as a creditable or final settlement of the questions which arise from the existing conditions of poverty and labour. That is coming to be admitted by every one. What the Church has to make clear, is that the reality of brotherhood, the unflinching acceptance of mutual obligation and service, is not to be brought about by legislation alone, nor even by systematic philanthropy alone, but by the spirit of Christ giving vitality and power to the dead machinery of human methods.

Now our hope that the Church will take her due place in the revolution which is daily going forward about us, lies chiefly in the fact that Churchmen are more and more approaching the problems of national life in a spirit of humility. We have at least begun to learn that we must understand the troubles and needs and temptations of whole classes of our countrymen if we are to help and guide them effectually. A patient study of the causes of poverty and the conditions of labour is seen to be part of the necessary equipment of the man who is to carry the Gospel of Christ to the wage-earner or the very poor, as the case may be.

So the painful knowledge of the problems before us, which alone makes answers possible or profitable, is coming to us; and if we had knowledge, surely courage and self-devotion are not lacking. It is a very easy thing to criticise the parish clergy — they get criticism enough and to spare from within the Church and without. But I do not know where else you would find men whose breeding and abilities would have won them success in any line of life, working unsparingly year in and year out for the wages, as it has been said, of an upper servant. Now they are not afraid of the wages of a servant; they are followers of One who took upon Him the form of a servant; but surely it is the duty of a Christian laity to see that the labourer's hire is given, that his ministry is not impeded, and his own spiritual life troubled by the lack of a living wage. But there are other things besides money which men are giving up to-day for Christ. Men gently nurtured, and full of the joy of living and the capacity for pleasure and amusement, choose to dwell in ugly sordid surroundings, in the back streets of some great town; choose a life that would be intolerably dull and wearisome if it were not glorified by their love for God and their fellow-creatures. During those years which I lived in an University, I have watched the transformation, by what I can only call the Grace of God, from that type of healthy paganism the

public schoolboy and undergraduate, into the noble, self-forgetting ideal of the Christian priest, and the Christian layman.

These things we may see, and thank God for them. Intelligence, zeal, humility, courage, devotion, and with them all, even because of them all, nowhere peace, everywhere controversy, rivalry, misunderstanding, everywhere powers that are wanted to advance the kingdom of Christ wasted on petty disputes. And on the whole we are content to have it so, to regard a vigorous self-assertion as a proper and necessary factor in the life of a Church.

I think we let ourselves be tempted to take St. Paul's favourite metaphor of the Christian Soldier in too literal a sense. We have forgotten the items of the sacred armoury—truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, the Word of God—and learned to look upon the Christian as a fighter, no longer of course with fire and sword, but still justified in using most of those weapons with which the world carries on its most cruel warfare. And in order that we may perversely take the metaphor in a literal sense, we are driven to declaring that the most plain and literal teaching of our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount has only a figurative sense, and cannot be applied to the government of great societies or to the conduct of everyday life.

We cannot have the peace of Eastertide, be-

cause we persistently seek it as the world giveth.

It is quaintly and beautifully said by some old chronicler, that England in the tenth century, when men began to build commonly with stone, put on a white robe of Churches. But by the twelfth century the land was white through its length and breadth with another whiteness, a white leprosy of castles. We visit what remains of those castles to-day with pleasure and interest. Each of them is a treasure-house for the antiquary and the historian, a playground for the sentimentalist. If we are unwise, we may even wish ourselves back in the great days when men built so enduringly, and at the least we sincerely admire the beauty of the rugged walls, weathered by the suns and rains of many hundred years, till they seem part of nature's handiwork, and garlanded with foliage that conceals and graces their decay. But it was with very different thoughts that Englishmen first saw the gross structure rise in all the raw whiteness of fresh-hewn stone. If you will consider, a *new* Norman castle, with its brutal outlines, and little windows, must have been a hideous building. And if the castle itself was ugly, the thing it symbolised was uglier still, for it meant the right of private war—the right of every lord to call out his vassals and retainers, and lay waste the lands of his neighbour, and besiege his castle—a right possessed and unspar-

ingly abused by the barons of Normandy; ever coveted by the English baronage, and exercised by them whenever the Crown was not strong enough to prevent it. We can understand that such a custom would be most congenial to those proud, grasping, passionate natures, unscrupulous in doing a wrong, furious in resenting one. To them the right of private war was a cherished or coveted privilege; even, in their fierce wantonness, a welcome diversion. But let us imagine what it was to the peasant who was called away from his fields to fight, and perhaps fall, in a quarrel not his own; who in his turn saw his crops ravaged, his homestead burned, his wife and children killed and tortured and worse. And the right of private war was not only a cruel wrong to individuals, it was fatal to the national life. Not till it was put down for ever, could England again advance in the path of unity and progress and civilisation.

The castles are gone or stand as ruins, or are patched into museums or private dwellings. No longer does the baron go forth over the drawbridge with his men at morning and return at evening laden with spoil, or, as it may be, return not at all; but the spirit of man is not changed though its trappings be changed. The right of private war is exactly what the world claims for its children, what it teaches them to regard as their dearest power, their surest means of success.

'Assert yourself,' is the world's gospel. 'Im-
'press yourself upon your surroundings; be master
'of those with whom you have to do. There are
'certain things worth having, money, success,
'pleasure. Every one wants them, and there is
'not enough of them for all. See that you get
'your share, and more than your share. If others
'get none, that is not your fault. The prizes are
'for the strong, the swift, and the cunning. You
'need not be scrupulous if you are not found out;
'you must not be scrupulous if you mean to suc-
'ceed, and success covers everything. So fight
'on boldly for your own hand, keep a hard heart
'and a cool head, and let the weakest go to the
'wall.'

'But it shall not be so among you; but he that
'is great among you, let him be your minister; and
'he that will be chief, as he that doth serve.' That is the gospel of our Master, of Him who pleased not Himself, who when He was reviled, reviled not again, when He suffered He threatened not, who is highly exalted because He obeyed. He tells us not to resist evil, much less inflict evil.

The truth is that all Christians, by taking the name of Christian, have renounced for themselves the right of private war. If our profession means anything, we must give up, or rather we have solemnly given up all forms of aggression and violence from the most barbarous to the most civilised, and with them, all underhand policy and

misrepresentation; and more than that, we have surrendered the extreme insistence on our undoubted rights, the punctilious exactions of personal dignity which are so dear to every human soul. Christ's example and His plain teaching demand no smaller self-sacrifice than that; and we have taken Him for our Master, our Pattern, our Teacher in all things.

Yet for the most part we are contented to comfort or delude ourselves with what is surely a sophistry, that the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount was meant for another age, a different society from ours; and we add that it will not work in modern conditions, without pausing to ask ourselves whether it is Christ's teaching or the modern conditions which are at fault. Meanwhile we tend with an almost unconscious cynicism to accept selfishness as the principle of action, and to be guided solely by expediency in our government at home, and in our relations especially with weaker peoples abroad. In trade, professed Christians, and, I believe, strange as it may seem, sincere Christians throw themselves with enthusiasm into the relentless battle which we call free competition, and permit themselves to use, in the name of custom and necessity, weapons and stratagems which no morality unblinded by self-interest could defend or allow.

But we are not all politicians, or traders, or even investors. Nevertheless on the mind and

conduct of us all, Christ makes His claim. We must all ask ourselves, Does my Christianity make me more unselfish, gentle, conciliatory? does it enable me not to resent an injury in act or thought? Under its influence am I growing less insistent on my exact rights, less touchy about my dignity? We know that it is not always so with the best of us. We know that it is not at all so with many of us. Instead of carrying the pattern and teaching of Christ into our daily life and business, we are much more inclined to take the methods and feelings of the world into our religious life. But surely if the Truce of God, the Peace of Easter, is most necessary to us as individuals, it is not less necessary to us as Churchmen and Churchwomen.

And here I feel that I am on dangerous ground: that my feet are pressing a treacherous crust of glowing ashes, which cover the lava streams of a volcano, whose fires are not quiescent, but even now perhaps seething to an outbreak which may engulf towns and homesteads and the labours of men. At a time like this, when so much is in the balance, when men's minds are still hot with resentment, and shaken with mistrust, one who takes upon himself to speak of the duties of Churchmanship has need to keep well the door of his lips, lest ill-considered thought issuing in hasty words mislead or irritate his hearers.

I shall not presume to offer you counsel or guidance on the great question which perplexes the minds of men and troubles their hearts in England to-day.

But a humbler office of the preacher, humbler but perhaps not less useful may be mine, the task of stirring Christian people, and myself among the number, to reconsider for themselves—let me say for ourselves—questions which we have too lightly regarded as settled, and to examine, without passion or prejudice, in the clear light of the Gospel the principles on which we are acting or about to act.

The end we all desire is peace. Now peace may be attained and can only be attained in one of two ways: either by hard fighting and complete victory, or by mutual concession and goodwill. And the question which I humbly ask you to consider is whether the Church—that is, we collectively—has not sometimes in seeking peace chosen the wrong way, and been stiff in the wrong place and conciliatory in the wrong place. Let us consider that question not contentiously as partisans, but sincerely as members of a society which needs above all things at this moment the Spirit of Wisdom and the Spirit of Love.

'Our wrestling is not against flesh and 'blood, but against the principalities, against 'the powers, against the world rulers of this dark-

'ness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness 'in heavenly places.'

The Church's duty is war, truceless war, with sin. We are all ready to admit that in times past the Church has not always been faithful to her duty: that she has made terms with convenient and profitable evil; and has purchased wealth and security all too dear by unworthy capitulations. The time of such dangers is never past. The temptation is always with us, and especially in days of stress, to abate a little, or more than a little, from the perfect standard of Christian temper and conduct; to grasp eagerly at tactical advantages without thinking if we are entirely just or charitable, and to look with an indulgent eye on schemes which promise success for the moment; to meet the world on its own ground with weapons borrowed from its own armoury; to do evil that good may come of it.

Let us therefore be exactly certain to-day that the end we are pursuing is pure from all taint of self-interest; let us be delicately scrupulous about the means we use, lest, in employing the world's methods, we find that we are half unconsciously directing them to worldly ends of policy and ambition.

It is plain that as Christians we are debarred from animosity and bitter feeling against our opponents: we are in duty bound to put on

their proposals and intentions the best, not the worst construction they will bear. And if they misrepresent us and speak evil of us, we may not retort in kind, we may not render evil for evil, and railing for railing. We must bend our rebellious wills and angry hearts to the command of Christ, 'But I say unto you, love 'your enemies, bless them that curse you, do 'good to them that hate you, and pray for them 'that despitefully use you, and persecute you.'

Blessed indeed were we if we could feel that we were suffering wholly for righteousness' sake, but in truth *their* strength lies in our default. The tremendous and hitherto unanswerable argument for those who reject our religion is the failure of professing Christians in the past, and in the present, to live the Christian life. Here is the key of the whole matter. The test of Christianity in the individual, the proof of Christianity as a gospel of salvation is its power to mould the life and conduct after the pattern of its Founder.

And while we are forced to recognise the obligation of showing fairness and goodwill to our opponents, can we give less to our brethren? It is unhappily needless to describe to you the quarrels and bickerings which disturb the peace of the Church of England, they are shockingly apparent both to us and to our ill-wishers. We may yet look back upon this day of trial and reproach as a day of blessing, if its tribulation

can draw more closely together all loyal Churchmen, and make them forget their differences in the common danger; and not Churchmen only, but all who love Christ and are trying humbly to walk in His steps, even though they follow not with us in all things. We may rightly hate and fear Nonconformity. For we believe that Christ meant to found an ordered society that should be one in Him, and that the sacraments are the life as well as the symbol of that brotherhood. We believe that the divisions of Christendom make it harder for men to live the Christian life, and spread the Christian Faith. But we dare not hate Nonconformists. We must remember that it was through our coldness and intolerance that they went out from us at the first. If the Church had lived by the rule of Christ, they would not have left us; if we live by it now they will return to us again. No one can blame us for proselytising that way. And we must acknowledge, though it perplex us, that there are good Christians outside the Church as well as within it.

I think it is impossible to exaggerate the greatness of the issues which depend on the action and temper of the Church of England (I do not mean the bishops and the clergy only) in the present crisis. I believe that the question is whether Britain shall be in years that are now at hand a Christian nation or not. If we can

bring ourselves to accept unreservedly the teaching of Christ, and be guided by it alone. If we take as our watchword the word of truth, of meekness and righteousness, we shall prove worthy of our great trust. We shall win the souls of men not by constraint or argument, but by the beauty and usefulness of our life as individuals and as a society. It will not be a time of worldly greatness and prosperity for the Church. We may have to suffer the loss of many things which we value, perhaps too highly; but it is written, 'He 'that loseth his life for My sake, the same shall 'find it.'

May it not be said hereafter of our Holy City, as it was said long ago by One who stood upon the brow of the hill looking across to Jerusalem, 'If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this 'thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace; 'but now they are hid from thine eyes.'

THE END

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